THE BOOK JUDGES

Jan Beute

Judges 1

There are multiple historical and typological threads of the Book of Judges creating a profound allegory for the Church age today, a period of divine "waiting" between redemption and consummation. It portrays the Judges era not as mere chaos or moral decay, but as a deliberate divine interlude, mirroring our current dispensation under the New Covenant. Below, I'll distil the core themes, highlight key scriptural anchors, and offer brief reflections to extend the meditation, staying true to the biblical framework you outline.

The outstanding feature of the time of the Book of Judges is that the Israelites had no king.
‘In those days Israel had no king, so the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes.’ (Judg. 17:6)
The time when the Book of Judges is set is difficult for various reasons. The main reason is that there is no real structure or continuity in the book. It seems as if they lived during the dark ages of Israel. The history is wedged between the time of Joshua and King Saul. For Israel, everything looked bleak after Joshua died, and God forbade them to have a king. However, God did guarantee Israel a king, but Israel was not ready to have one. Obviously, Israel prematurely anointed Abimelech as king (Judg. 9). It was against the wishes of God and also his father, Gideon.
In the law of Moses, there is mention of Israel having a king, and even in the Book of Genesis it speaks of a kingdom emanating from the tribe of Judah.
‘The sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come.’ (Gen. 49:10)
The phrase ‘until Shiloh comes’ denotes our Lord’s second return to earth. Israel had no king for more than 600 years, and when King Saul did ascend to the throne, it quickly became obvious that he was the wrong person. The next king was King David, and as he was from the tribe of Judah, he was clearly God’s chosen one.
Israel’s history commenced with Abraham, who was called by God from Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 11:28) to the land he was not accustomed to. It was sheer faith that made Abraham obey God when He called him to leave his home to go to another land. The purpose was that God would give him an inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. Even when he did reach the land of Canaan, he lived like a foreigner, living in tents. He had great wealth, and he bought no land except for a piece of land as a burial site for his wife Sarah.
Since the time of Joseph, Israel lived in Egypt, to be later dumped into slavery.
After a 40-year journey in the desert, they entered the Promised Land. 430 years lapsed from the time God called Abraham until they reached the

Promised Land. They did possess the land, and it took them 7 years to defeat their enemies.
Following this history, they had to wait another 600 years until King David and the building of the palace. We realise that the building of God's temple would be completed once the king had his palace. Once the throne of Solomon was settled, the house for God could be built. It took Israel hundreds of years to mature until they were ready to build the temple. Whatever happened in the meantime is relevant to the time of the Judges. Many skirt the Book of Judges and its gruesome tales and continue by reading the next book, Ruth, or the time of the Kings. Its history is soiled by offensive stories.
The length of time the Judges ruled Israel was longer than the time of the kings.
Today, the time of the Judges can be likened to today's democratic society. Democracy is our norm, and they must have lived during a time very similar to the time of the Patriarchs. Abraham did not subject himself to any king or any city, and he did whatever he deemed best. They did whatever was right in their own eyes.
The complete history of the Book of Judges is a time of waiting until they appointed a king. The reason for the long wait is not them refusing a king, but God, who denied them the opportunity. When the people of Israel wanted to anoint Gideon as king, he refused and told them that God is their rightful King. The King resides in heaven, and we have no liberty to proclaim another king. Israel did not physically see Him, but He did intercede for them.

Our time of waiting
Paul says Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of humanity, and after that He will appear a second time. When He returns, He will not deal with sin, but He will save those who eagerly await Him (Heb. 9:28). With His return, His sole interest will be our final salvation and not our sins that are already dealt with at the cross. At that time, our sins will not interest Him, as it did engross Him for 2,000 years. He is now seated at the right hand of God, cleansing our sins.
Paul says that long ago God spoke to our ancestors in countless and various ways, as through the prophets. However, He now speaks to us through His Son. God did promise everything to the Son, whom He appointed as heir of all creation. He made the universe, and the Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of His being (Heb. 1:1–2). The Books of Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians convey a similar message of Christ.
The daunting question today is: Christ did leave us—where is He now? Our Lord Jesus did live on earth, and the Messiah did resurrect—where did He disappear to? The early apostles had to clarify where Christ is, and they explained that Christ went to the highest place in heaven. The great confusion of the Jews is that they believed He will return and be with them for all eternity. The Messiah did come, but He disappeared to heaven, and in heaven He will prepare a place for us. His stay in heaven is to benefit us.

God put everything beneath His feet, and by placing everything beneath Himself, He left nothing—each stone will not be left unturned. Yet at present, we do not notice that everything is subjected to Him (Heb. 2:8). The Apostle Paul says previously God spoke to the prophets (Heb. 1:2), but now He is speaking to us via His great Prophet. Moses was a prophet, and he relayed the message of God to the people, but now Christ is the great Prophet, and He will reveal the secrets of God. The Book of Hebrews is absorbed with regard to Aaron being the high priest (Heb. 4:14 & 1:5). Aaron was the brother of Moses. In the Bible, the king, high priest, and prophets were anointed, and David was both a king and a high priest when he ate the five loaves of bread that were meant for the high priest. Christ is the Anointed, and He is greater than Moses (prophet) or Aaron (high priest) and David (the king). We can acquaint ourselves with Him via the Word. During the time of our Lord Jesus, the Jewish people had two high priests. The one fulfilled the duties of a high priest, and unofficially the other high priest was regarded as their king. Similarly, today we regard our Lord as our High Priest and not as our king. Previously, the high priest was noticed by his colourful clothing, but not on the great Day of Atonement. Then he was hidden in the tabernacle or temple and was hardly noticed by the people. On that day, when the people did see him, he exchanged his colourful garment for a plain linen garment with a turban on his head. It is similar today, as Christ is not noticed on earth as He is seated in heaven. Many find that too difficult to grasp and ask why He is not physically with us today. The reason is that we are sinners, and He accomplishes a work that only He can perform in heaven (Heb. 5:1). He is doing great work for us in the inner sanctuary, where the high priest used to be on the great Day of Atonement. He will only appear once the Church is complete with the rapture. Then we will see Him, and the world will realise their folly. If we do not see Him today, we can be assured that He intercedes for us in heaven. The Lord Jesus gave Himself for the Church (Titus 2:14) to cleanse us, and even to those who are redeemed. This immense work of Christ is least known. To try to cleanse ourselves is time-wasting, and doing that is to disrespect our Lord’s work for us. Usually, we ordain church leaders to explain how we can cleanse ourselves, thinking they are competent to know which sins need to be confessed, and to which we can turn a blind eye. That is time-wasting, as the work is already accomplished by Christ. That is the least of our worries. We need to live a life of faith, and Christ will lead us, and He has the sole responsibility to cleanse our sins. We understand that He is our King, but He is not King Jesus who lived on earth—no, He is the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. It says that Melchizedek is a king and also a high priest. When we acknowledge Him as our High Priest, we indirectly also acknowledge Him as our King. Once Israel was redeemed from Egypt, they had to live in the Promised Land for 600 years without a king.

The time of the Judges is compared to our dispensation, a time before David was anointed as king over Israel, and once David is the anointed one, then the world will be part of the Millennium.

Early in the history of Israel, God delivered them from slavery in Egypt, and during their Exodus they even crossed the mighty Red Sea. For 40

years, they sojourned in the desert. Since then, Israel lived in the Promised Land, and they had the Judges. To judge is to be an arbitrator of justice, and later the king David had a similar duty to judge the people. The king had to communicate the Word of God, and it would procure indisputable justice. Now, any king is a descendant from the throne, and no common man can be ordained as such. God chose David, and his descendants did ascend the throne. It is different with the judges, as the judges were chosen randomly, and they were liable for their own deeds. Some were appointed by God and others not. They had the freedom to lead Israel even when they were deemed as common people. Merely by adhering to God's Word, they made themselves instruments to free Israel from bondage. That would be impossible once the people had a king. That is the main difference between the period of the judges and the time of the kings.

The time of the Judges is a time of waiting. The law of Moses stipulates the duties and the rights of the king, and that was foretold hundreds of years before Israel had one. At the time of Saul, the Lord told them to be definite if they wanted a king, knowing it would cost them dearly. However, the Lord did hesitate to appoint King Saul. The hub of any country is their king, and Israel demanded one. In the Book of Hebrews, Ch. 3, Christ is compared to the great prophet Moses. Moses cared for Israel, and he did the duties of a king, as he was the first leader to impart the law.

Similarly, today Christ is the first leader to acquaint us with the new covenant. We share the first days of the new covenant, and we live outside the confines of the old covenant. Someone like Moses will lead us en route out of Egypt to the land of Canaan, and we do respect Him as our King, even though He is not mentioned as one. Moses was not known to be a king, but when Korah challenged him, God made public that Moses is the blessed one. Moses was a prophet, and there was no mentioning of a king or a kingdom, and that is similar today. Moses guided the people from Egypt via the Red Sea, portraying our death and resurrection in Christ. As the nation descended into the water of the Red Sea, they cheated death, and similarly we defeated death.

Christ deserves far greater glory than Moses, just as a person who builds a fine house deserves more praise than the house itself (Heb. 3:3). During the time of Saul, God allowed a king, and soon afterwards the people of Israel veered away from Him. Before King Solomon, the Lord forbade Israel to build a temple, but once Israel had a palace and proper houses to live in, the Lord told them the time was ready to build one for Him.

God chose the opportune time and not the Israelites.

We have a similar experience with the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The real Exodus or Passover lasted three days, and it is compared to the time of our Lord's death and resurrection. With Christ's resurrection, Israel and the entire world are redeemed from the real slavery of sin and the law, and not only Egypt, as in the days of Moses. We are freed from every known bondage and even from the law that is known as the first principles of our world.

Via the death of the Lord Jesus, the reign of the law ended, and our lives that were yoked by sin are freed. We tend to do the things we don't want to do, including the Christians who want to comply with the Ten Commandments.

Paul says in Rom. 7 that they are enslaved to sin, doing the things they do not want to do. We used to live in slavery, and indeed we are freed. Why comply with the things that tie us down? We need to build a solid foundation. The deliverance is accomplished, and we yearn for Christ's Kingdom to descend to earth. Then the King of heaven will make things new.

The Messiah did appear—and what happened to His Kingdom? Usually, that sort of question ends in an argument, as there are many opinions. We do have a king, and Gideon had the real insight when he told the people that the King is in heaven, and from that place He will rule them. In the future, the King will endorse His kingdom on earth, but we need to wait, as Gideon did.

Each morning at school, we used to commence the day reciting the Lord's Prayer; it says: 'Thy kingdom come.'

The King will come, and the question is not when, but rather from where? The kingdom is not visible on earth today, and neither is there any trace of it happening today. The kingdom is not here but in heaven. With Christ's second coming to earth, it will flood our world. If there is a king, there will be a kingdom; our Lord is King, and He is now seated at the right hand of God in heaven. The kingdom will expand from heaven to earth and not from Jerusalem.

The Lord's Prayer continues to say: 'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' The will or the wishes of the Lord is to increase His Kingdom on earth, but it will be directed from heaven to earth.

If we cannot discern the New Testament truths, we will never understand the Book of Judges. In the Book of Judges, we find the truths of our dispensation, and we do value them.

How can we survive on earth if the kingdom is distant and in heaven? Those kinds of truths are found in the Book of Judges, and we need to be familiar with them. Our thoughts ought to be in heaven, and from there we will commune with God. His Kingdom will appear, and in the near future He will return, at God's appointed time. The great mystery is that the histories of the Old Testament convey the truths that synchronise with our dispensation. The Book of Judges has innumerable examples, and we need to treasure them. Each chapter has far greater spiritual import, and we can discern them.

We, as part of the Church, share the same backdrop as the Israelites who lived during the time of the Judges. Israel was freed from the slavery of Egypt, and similarly we too are freed from the bondage of sin and death. We are now seated with Christ in heaven, but we have no evidence to substantiate our claims, and as the Israelites of old, we need to wait for the King from heaven.

Before we commence with the Book of Judges, we need to study the last few chapters of the Book of Joshua. It seems to melt into the first few chapters of the Book of Judges. The Book of Joshua ended with three

deaths, namely the death of Joseph, Joshua, and Eleazar. The last written word in the Book of Joshua is ‘Ephraim’. That is relevant, as the name Ephraim appears 22 times in the Book of Judges, and especially the mountains of Ephraim. Ephraim epitomises the Church, as we are the real firstborn since Christ’s resurrection. The lives of Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar the high priest ended in the mountains of Ephraim, as they were buried there. Both Joshua and Joseph died being 110 years old, and they had much in common. It is mentioned twice in our Bible, and no other person in the Bible reached that age. They were buried close to each other and ruled Israel. In both the history of the Book of Genesis and Joshua, it ended with Israel having no king.

Eleazar was also buried in the mountains, and typologically he signifies the same truths. Joseph dreamed of the 11 stars, and he died being 110 years old. He became a king, but that ended abruptly. Joseph was 30 years old when he became king of Egypt, and he ruled for 80 years. This can be broken down into the 7 + 7 + 66 years, and with the 30 years it totals 110 years. If we divide them by 2, we have the quotient 3½ + 3½ + 33 years, and the 40 years corresponds to the future great tribulation. At the end of the great tribulation, the Lord will appear on earth as the rightful king, and all the kings of the earth will agree. The 110 years of Joshua or Joseph will end with the definite appearance of the King, and He will rule during the Millennium. The ratio of the 3½ + 3½ + 33 years is often found in the Bible, and that is clarified in my notes in the Book of Daniel and Revelation.

The 11 pictures to us what will lead us to the 12 or the manifestation of His Kingdom. 11 is 10 plus 1; the 10 is our faith in the Word of God, and with the number 11 we yearn for His Kingdom (12). 11 is also 12 minus 1, as we need to wait for His return to earth. We are trapped in a time of waiting after we accepted the written Word of God. Once Christ returns, we will be ushered into His Kingdom. God spoke to us, as in the last days He spoke through His Son (Heb. 1:2). After Christ’s resurrection, He spoke to the 10 disciples, as Judas betrayed Him, and Thomas doubted His resurrection. Officially, there had to be 12 disciples before the message of the Gospel could be preached on the day of Pentecost.

Judges 16 and 17 mention the 1,100 lost pieces of silver that were lost, to be later found. Those truths become meaningful once we relate them to our dispensation.

Joseph was known as a king and disappeared once he was 110 years old. We may ask what happened to him. In the New Testament, Joseph, the father of Jesus, also died. He was named ‘Joseph, thou son of David’ (Matt. 1:20). When our Lord was born at Bethlehem, Joseph was the rightful son of David. When our Lord preached on earth, He was the son of David. Before that time, Joseph disappeared and died; otherwise, our Lord was not the rightful heir. Once our Lord was called the Son of David, it was only possible once Joseph died.

The deaths of Joseph, Joshua, and Eleazar do convey a message to us, as their bones will speak once more. Our bones yield and harbour the blood we need to live from; but the bones of those three men will generate the blood or the new life to communicate a message of hope. Their bones that

are placed in the midst of Israel are a sure guarantee that true life will proceed from them, and it will transform Israel. They will share in the blessings of Christ's resurrected life. We are acquainted with the promises invested in Joseph, Joshua, and Eleazar—and it will radiate to all Israel, but firstly the Church. It is a threefold promise of Christ's eminent Kingdom, even though on earth we find no hint of it.

Whenever Israel decided to worship other gods, God ignored them, but He remained truthful to those who cried for help. Most of the time, the people refused God, and overall He did not address the nation, as He remained silent in heaven. Whenever He spoke to the nation of Israel, He chose to speak to them via Gideon or the other judges. Similarly, today Christ does not speak to a crowd of people, but He speaks to us individually. He chose to be silent in heaven, yet He intercedes for us as our High Priest. When Gideon cried to God, He spoke to him, and quietly he did whatever was asked of him. He believed God, and gladly he took the initiative to deliver the nation without involving the entire nation. Overall, I believe that Israel was not bothered whether God spoke to them. However, a few hundred people were faithful to Gideon.

We, as the Israelites who lived in the times of the Judges, will experience many hindrances, and to think that we are competent to address them is wrong. The Corinthians wanted to 'rule' (1 Cor. 4:8), thinking they had mastered all their hindrances. Paul reminded them that it was premature. We will reign with Him, but in the meantime we will suffer if we want to remain faithful to His Word. We are persecuted, and now it is not the appropriate time to reign. When the Israelites fled Egypt in a hurry, they did not try to defeat the Egyptians. Even Paul had to escape at midnight from his brothers the Jews, when he was lowered in a basket. He hid himself in the cloak of darkness (Acts 9:25). Throughout the time of the Judges, Israel could have indulged themselves with freedom. Similarly, today we can freely come together and worship God. We have no rights on earth, as we relinquished them when we accepted Christ. Our bread cannot be buttered on both sides. We left the slavery of Egypt, and we are en route in the desert to the Promised Land. As previously noted, the judges had to wait for their King, and we too need to wait for our final redemption.

Now we are the despised and do live outside the daily commune. There are many wars, and we need to equip ourselves to prevent any war from spilling into our borders. If that happens, we will deal with the enemy as Israel did, who battled with the Midianites. The Midianites will always be a threat to Israel and linger at our borders. That is where they need to stay. Once we allow them inside, they will hurt Israel, and that is a sure lesson for us. Whenever Israel abandoned God, He allowed the enemy inside their borders. If we live in faith, we will discover our rightful place is in heaven (Eph. 2:5–6). Our strength is fixed on Him. 1,000 years ago, the Crusaders were determined to liberate Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and they trusted their skills. In the end, they failed miserably. God will do everything at His own time, and any of our efforts will be time-wasting. However, God aided the Israelites in a rather peculiar way: the 300 men with Gideon who broke the earthen clay vessels to reveal the light (Christ),

or the woman who pinned down the enemy with a tent peg through his head.
Throughout the time of the Judges, the people had to live in faith, and they were totally dependent on God. That mirrors the believers in our dispensation. There were many believers in Hebrews 11, but Paul wanted to draw our special attention to the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the other prophets (Heb. 11:32). The mere mentioning of the four judges in the Book of Hebrews is to warn us, as the judges lived in a period very similar to ours today—when God seemed to have distanced Himself. We too need to be steadfast and must rely on God’s Word.

Adoni-bezek and the 70 kings

The biblical account in Judges 1:1–7 describes a pivotal moment shortly after Joshua's death, when the tribes of Judah and Simeon, acting on God's directive, launch a campaign against the Canaanites and Perizzites in the Promised Land. They defeat 10,000 enemies at Bezek and capture the Canaanite king Adoni-Bezek (meaning "Lord of Bezek" or "Lord of Lightning"). As punishment, they amputate his thumbs and big toes—a fate he admits mirrors what he had inflicted on 70 captive kings, who were left to scavenge scraps under his table. He acknowledges this as divine retribution ("As I have done, so God has repaid me") before being taken to Jerusalem, where he dies. This episode sets the tone for the Book of Judges, illustrating themes of conquest, justice, and the cyclical nature of Israel's struggles without a centralized leader.

Adoni-bezek and the 70 kings

Key Players and Battles

- Judah + Simeon: The "true Jew" (Rom. 2:29; heart-circumcised, Col. 2:11; Deut. 10:16), reborn via Christ's death/resurrection. Judah ("praise") + Simeon ("hear/obey") = believing remnant/Church, united in faith, not doubt. They go "as one" to victory, God-given.
- Canaanites: 70 kings symbolize world's 70 nations (Gen. 10; future choice: Christ or alienation). Natural claimants to God's promises, now unbelieving "heathens."
- Perizzites: "Villagers" outside city walls (unlike walled urbanites), yet allied with Canaanites. Typify Pharisees/religious hypocrites: Babylon-exiled Jews (Talmud-makers) who reject God, enforce man-made laws (Col. 2:8; traditions over Christ). Like Lot in Sodom, they infiltrate world politics (e.g., EU's regulatory zeal), praying smugly (Luke 18:11) while ensnaring others. Church must exit such "walls" (Heb. 13:13; Ezek. 38:11's unwalled future).

The symbolism

- Beyond the literal, the amputation carries deeper symbolic weight, especially in Jewish and Christian interpretations, drawing from broader scriptural imagery:
- Connection to priestly consecration: In Leviticus 8:23–24, during Aaron's ordination as high priest, blood from a sacrificial ram is applied to the right ear lobe, thumb, and big toe—symbolizing full consecration of hearing (obedience to God), doing (service through hands), and walking (living in holiness). Amputating these in Adoni-Bezek and the kings could represent disqualification from any priestly or sacred role, marking them as unfit for divine service or leadership.
- By doing this, Adoni-Bezek not only humiliated his captives but also profaned what was meant to be holy, asserting false authority over them.
- Spiritual mutilation and insensitivity: In typological readings (where Old Testament events foreshadow New Testament truths), the thumbs and big toes represent human capacity for spiritual "grip" and "balance." Without thumbs, one can't firmly hold onto God's word or perform righteous works; without big toes, one stumbles in faith's path. Adoni-

After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel enquired of the Lord, ‘Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?’ The Lord said, ‘Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.’ And Judah said to Simeon his brother, ‘Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites. And I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you.’ So Simeon went with him. Then Judah went up, and the Lord gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek. They found Adoni-bezek at Bezek and fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes. And Adoni-bezek said, ‘Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me.’ And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there (Judg. 1:1–7).

The history of the 70 kings who had their thumbs and toes amputated may sound absurd, and that history is relatively unknown. The question is, what was their motive? Was it to render the kings incompetent for any battle?
Clearly, it would be difficult for the 70 kings to manoeuvre or grip their swords efficiently. We will find there is a far greater typological reason. Their principal king, Adoni-bezek, ended with the same fate, as previously he had amputated the big toes and thumbs of the 70 kings that opposed him.
After Joshua, their great leader, died, Israel felt void, having no king. Worst of all, there were many enemies. They had to wait for an appropriate moment to announce a king such as David. The five Books of Moses did mention a king, but the timing was inappropriate. They had to learn how to deal with their many enemies. Now we are wedged in very similar settings, having no king on earth, as He is in heaven. In the near future, when He does appear, the enemy will be slain, and He will reign triumphantly. We are likened to the Israelites living in the time of the Judges, and we need to be patient. The question remains: are we captors or are we defeated, and how do we combat our enemy? That is the theme of the complete Book of Judges. As for us, a new covenant has commenced, but daily we are confronted with the old, and the enemy roams around us. We do live after the death of Joshua—or the Lord Jesus—as the name Joshua translated to Greek is Jesus. The Book of Judges commences with the words, ‘Now after the death of Joshua,’ and to us who live after the death of our Lord Jesus, the message remains alike.
The question arises: who will be the first to fight the enemy or the Canaanites who lived in the Promised Land? The Canaanites are natural men, and according to verse 7 they had 70 kings, and similarly today the world is divided into the 70 nations. In the future, the world will be forced to choose either Christ as their Saviour or else they will be alienated. Israel had the message to conquer all their enemies—those people who wrongly claim the land to be theirs.
We have the concession to the land but not the unbelievers; yet today we do not contend for the land. The first reason is that we are heavenly citizens, and it is senseless to battle if the Lord promised the land to us. It is similar to Abraham, who lived in the Promised Land, and he had no urgency or desire to obtain the land or to get rid of the enemies. He only reasoned the Lord would give it to him. Now we need to ascertain our victory, but our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual powers in heaven.
In this passage, the first question is who will be the first to fight the enemy, and God told them it would be Judah. We may ask, who is Judah? According to the Book of Romans, ch. 2, they are the Jews, and the obvious question to ask is: who is a Jew and what is its meaning?
‘He is a Jew, who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—it is spiritual and not literal. His praise is not from men but from God.’ (Rom. 2:29)
The real Jew is not circumcised via the flesh but rather it is a matter of the heart. Our faith in the resurrected Christ is settled in our hearts.

With the circumcision, the old man or the prepuce is done away with, and then the new glans is uncovered to procure life. We are given new life, and in the Book of Colossians it is explained in greater detail:
‘In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ.’ (Col. 2:11)
A real Jew is a person who is born again and whose heart is circumcised; the only means is via their death and resurrection in Christ. It says in the Old Testament:
‘Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart and be stiff-necked no longer.’ (Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4)
Figuratively speaking, the Jews conveyed the reborn tribe and projected to us today; they epitomise the Church. Today, from God’s viewpoint, there is no other people to concern Him except the Church (Gal. 6:15). He only reckons with the Church and no other nation on earth.
Judah asked Simeon to join him to fight the Canaanites. In Hebrew, the meaning of the word Simeon is to listen or to obey. Together, Simeon and Judah are the believing remnant of today, as they believe in the resurrected Christ.
Do not be tricked into thinking it was an ethical issue, thinking Judah doubted God in winning the battle and therefore he begged Simeon his brother for help. Judah was not alarmed when he asked Simeon. Their names attribute to them faith and as believers. The two brothers went as ‘one’ into the battle.
When the warriors from Judah and Simeon attacked their enemies, the Lord secured them the victory. In this chapter, not only the Canaanites are mentioned but also the Perizzites, and that is more difficult to explain. The Perizzites are mentioned many a time in the New Testament, and they are generally referred to as the Pharisees.
The Perizzites (14:8:1) are unlike the word Perez (13:1:1) that relates to the word Judah.
The word Perizzites represents a group of people who live in a village, living outside the main city walls. They lived in the countryside. The people living inside the ‘walls’ of the city were no Perizzites. The kings that were mentioned, especially in the Book of Joshua and Judges, were no real kings but rather magistrates who controlled the cities. The walls that surrounded the cities had built-in porches, seating people who used to control the inflow and the outflow of people to the city. Bricks were made from clay, and they were used to build the city walls. God forbade the people to build with clay as Nimrod, who builded great cities (Gen. 10). The first to build a city was Cain, and following him was Nimrod, who built Babylon.
The impression is that they reject God, and they feel secure within the confines of the wall—they can do whatever their heart desires to do. The unbelievers build the city walls, making their own laws, and the people who lived outside of them did not want to conform to their ideologies. Abraham ended up living in the country, and in the Book of Ezekiel it says that at the end of the Millennium Satan will war against the people who used to live freely in unwalled villages; he wishes to attack a peaceful and

unsuspecting people—all of them living outside the walls with gates and bars (Ezek. 38:11).
Now the Church is told to go outside the city wall (Heb. 13:13), and during the Millennium there will be no ‘city walls’.
Abraham left the cities of Babylon, and typologically Israel needs to remain outside, but strangely, here the Perizzites joined ranks with the Canaanites who ruled the cities.
During the time of the Lord, the religious leaders of the Jews were the Pharisees, and sadly they joined ranks with the world or their enemies. There ought to be a dissimilarity between the two, as the one lived within the walls and the other outside in the village. The Perizzites are the religious Jews from Babylon, who wrote the Talmud whilst in Babylon. They joined ranks with them, and sadly today their influence is still felt in the Church. It is a religious system, and they influenced Babylon and the world. When our Lord came to His own people, the people did not accept Him (John 1:11), as the masses were controlled by the Pharisees.
The Pharisees had to be different, as they are not part of the city, and their homeland ought to be the villages. The Pharisees became a vibrant religious order, and in no way did they worship God. Our Lord never had a good word to say regarding that religious order. They activated the law, which are the first principles of the world and not Christ. Deceitfully they maintain the traditions of men, the basic principles of the world, and not Christ (Col. 2:8). We are not called upon to make rules, as our world thrives on them; it captures their minds.
Whatever the commotion of the people of the world, their main concern is to practise the laws or to implement them. Brussels, the seat of the European Union, is an example. The people who needed to distance themselves from all the regularities are ensnared and heavily involved. The Israelites left the slavery of Egypt and Babylon behind them, but today many regard them as the principal nation to sway the laws. Those living in the claws of the law are controlled by a huge religious organisation. They deceive the people, thinking they are outside, but they are the Perizzites and heavily involved in implementing ‘laws’. We may question the motives of Lot, Abraham’s nephew. Both left Babylon, but Lot ended at Sodom and Gomorrah and even helped them with the politics. The angels had to force him from the city, and after some persuasion he left reluctantly. We fool ourselves if we aim to conform to all the activities of the world, and today it is the chief goal of many churches.
If that is not the world, what else is the world, or what occupies them? We are hypocrites if we choose to follow the things we once left or to address the concerns of the world.
The Pharisees taught the people to do the things they cannot do, and they even had the audacity to pray to God, thanking Him they are not as all the others (Luke 18:11). Israel had to be different, living without the gates or the confines of the city walls. In this chapter, the believing remnant (Judah and Simeon) are outside, and they will conquer the unbelieving Israel. They found the king, namely Adoni-bezek, and in Hebrew the word adoni means ‘lord’ and bezek the city. His title was the lord of the city.

Finally, they captured Adoni-bezek, and he personified the people of the town.

In Hebrew, the word bezem means a ‘lightning flash’ (Ezek. 1:14), and it was the flash Ezekiel saw amid the four living creatures of God. They are similar to the vision of the four cherubs or the seraphs, and together they depict the glory of the Lord. Later in the chapter, Ezekiel said: ‘Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord’ (Ezek. 1:28). It was a symbolic representation of the Lord’s glory.

We may question the need for the fire from heaven. The only reason is to set fire to the offering, and an example is the offering of Elijah on Mount Carmel. In the next sixth dispensation or the great tribulation, the beast or Satan falling from heaven will be allowed to manipulate the fire from heaven to judge the world.

God’s reason for allowing the fire is to consume an offering He accepts, to allow it to infuse heaven. Only God can control the fire from heaven, and in the Old Testament times the people died when they created strange fires on the altar (Num. 3:4). Adoni-bezek implies that he is the lord of the fire that strikes from heaven, or he is the one who directs the fire or the relationship between God and man. Literally, it implies that, via Israel, he directs the formalities to God. God’s relationship with the world was via Israel, and the temple that used to be at Mount Moriah was the meeting place between God and man and nowhere else. That will also be true during the Millennium, as the 70 nations will need to offer yearly at Jerusalem or else experience drought.

Adoni-bezek vividly portrays the religious sector of our world today—clustering all the diverse religions of the world. He is ruled by Satan, and what used to be directed by Israel landed squarely in the arms of Adoni-bezek. He surpassed the 70 nations of the world, as he was the gatekeeper between God and the nations of the world. Israel relinquished that privileged position, and they will be judged by the real believers or the Church.

Adoni-bezek is seized by Judah and Simeon—or the Church—as they are the real Israel. They amputated both his big toes and thumbs, and again we may question their motive. When Moses inaugurated Aaron as the high priest, he took some of the blood of a slain animal and put it on the lobe of his right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the big toe of his right foot (Lev. 8:23). To amputate the big toe and the thumb of Adoni-bezek is to prevent him from being ordained as a priest.

We need to recap the anatomical structure of the hand and foot. The thumb is the fifth finger, and it opposes the other four fingers. The four epitomise our world or the cross, and the fifth the working of God. The thumb comes from a completely different angle, and similarly God, who intervenes in our fifth dispensation. Altogether, the hand is perfectly structured, and without a thumb it becomes clumsy. It is the 1 opposing the other. The world of 4 will decay, and without the thumb the hand is awkward and insensitive to the spiritual matters. It loses grip and becomes insensitive to the Word of God. The previous name of Hebron was Kirjath-Arba, meaning a city of four. It was given to Caleb, and its name got changed to Hebron (Josh. 15:13), becoming a five or one. The

four became one in Christ as He caused the closeness. If the thumb and the great toe are chopped off, the spiritual side will never develop, and they will be left void. They are only good for the four, having no spiritual insight. In the end, the 70 nations had nothing to contribute, as their thumbs and big toes were amputated. Adoni-bezek did that, and he epitomises Israel. The message is that as long as the Pharisees rule the religious segment, the remaining 70 nations of the world will be doomed. Adoni-bezek did chop the 70 thumbs and big toes of the kings, and figuratively he rendered them insensitive to the deeper spiritual truths. The heathen nations became unfruitful as Israel refused to proclaim the real message from God. They missed their calling and opposed the light of God's Word.

In the history of the Gospel of Mark 5:22–43, we read that a leader of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus, fell at our Lord's feet, begging Him to heal his daughter. She was fatally ill, and that pictures Israel as impotent. Jairus means God, who enlightens us, and it also has to do with the light or the lightning from the thunderstorms.

While the daughter of Jairus was alive, there was another woman who was inflicted with a bleeding disorder for 12 years, and she was infertile. She was known to be heathen. We can argue she had her thumb and big toe amputated. Whilst Israel controlled the 'light', the nations of the world stumbled, and it includes Israel as portrayed by the daughter of Jairus. I believe she was 12 years old.

At the moment when the blood-flowing woman touched the hem of our Lord's garment, the daughter of Jairus died, and the woman got healed, at the expense of the daughter of Jairus. Once the real message of Christ is proclaimed, the heathen will be blessed, but the Jews who refuse the simple message of the Gospel will die, as the daughter of Jairus did.

Our Lord assured Jairus she was not dead but asleep, as the new life will flow in her body too. That will happen on the 'day of the Lord' when they do accept Christ.

Adoni-bezek did not argue or detest it when his big toes and thumbs were amputated. Once Israel realises that they are impotent, they will fully agree they did cause great harm. Israel—or Adoni-bezek—needed to be substituted by the believing Judah and Simeon. Once Israel accepts Christ, the reborn Israel will emerge, and the heathen nations will be blessed. The physical Israel needs to die to allow the light of the new covenant to glow amongst the nations of the world. The blood-flowing woman got healed once the Jews did not control the fire from heaven.

Adoni-bezek said he previously had 70 kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off, and they were eating scraps from under his table. Now God punished him, and he realised what wrong he did. They took him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

We may ask, who will be looking beneath the table for the scraps? It is the heathen nations with their 70 kings, as the real Israel will be gluttonous. Israel was at the table, having the covenant, and the 70 nations were dependent on them. Israel—or Adoni-bezek—will be abandoned as all the other nations of the world. They will be replaced by the Church. In the

future, the reborn Israel will enter the Millennium, and yearly the 70 nations of the world will feast at Jerusalem.
The old covenant will be abandoned, and it will be replaced by the 5 (thumb) or the grace of God. The new covenant will grant us the victory, and as Judah and Simeon once looked Adoni-bezek squarely in the face, similarly our Lord will grant us the victory. Today many countries may think they control the world as we are outside, but we will share in the victory of the Lord. We are placed outside the scope of the religious world with all its laws, with no king on earth, but yet we are more than conquerors and will inherit the kingdom.
Adoni-bezek was taken to Jerusalem as he ought to die. Similarly, the Jerusalem we know today will be bulldozed down on the future 'day of the Lord'. It needs to be replaced by the new.

Judges 3
This chapter is a simple account of a judge who saved the people of Israel from their enemies for 80 years! There was a continual drift in the history of Israel, and many times they disobeyed the Lord, falling into the hands of the enemy. It troubled them deeply, but when they called on the Name of the Lord for deliverance, He did heed them. Then they lived in peace, but not long afterwards they returned to their old habits.
Everything that happened to Israel needs to be an example to us (1 Cor. 10), and we must take note. Whenever Israel called on the Name of the Lord to deliver them, it condensed to a time in the future when our Lord returns to earth. It constantly reminds us of Christ, who will make an end of the old to create a new.
The setting of the Book of Judges is so varied and different, but in the end each example seems to blend how Christ will set things right. Many readers of the Bible will be bored with the idea of thinking that each of its pages pivots around the Lord, and no-one else. That is true, as He is the essence of the Scripture.
In that history, the Israelites disobeyed the Lord, and whatever wrong they did may not sound wrong to us. Vice versa, what seems right to us may be wrong in God's view.
In that history, God allowed the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the Amalekites to taunt the Israelites, and taxes were enforced on them. Their enemies were known as the brother nations of Israel. The Amalekites are a nation stemming from Esau, and both Ammon and Moab had Lot as their ancestor, who was the uncle of Abraham.
They were the older brothers of Israel, as Esau to Jacob and Lot to Abraham. Being older, they had greater individual privileges, and today they are all known as the Arab world.
The enemies defeated Israel and took possession of Jericho, the city of the palms, and they served Eglon from Moab for eighteen years. Here, Jericho is not specifically named but always known by its palms. A palm tree with a long stem and a raised crown of leaves epitomises the resurrected Christ. In Hebrew, the name palm is Tamar, a name given to many in Israel. They are the princesses of Israel, and together they portray the believing remnant in Christ.

The Fate of Eglon

The story fits the cyclical pattern of Judges: sin → oppression → cry for help → deliverance → peace.

Eglon's obesity enables the fatal thrust; his servants' delay allows escape; the "secret message from God" is literal judgment.

Typological and Symbolic of Old Testament events foreshadow Christ and spiritual realities:

- Eglon as type of Satan or the old covenant/flesh: His name means "calf-like" (evoking idolatry like the golden calf); "round" belly symbolizes false eternity (ouroboros-like self-sufficiency), disrupted by the sword. His oppression for 18 years ties to Luke 13 (tower of Siloam; crippled woman), representing bondage under law/Satan, ended by Christ's deliverance.
- Ehud as type of Christ: Left-handed (humiliation on earth, accomplishing redemption through "weakness"); from Benjamin ("son of the right hand," ironic); name means "united/one" (unity in Christ, Gal. 3:28). The hidden sword on the right thigh = Word of God girded for new life (1 Pet. 1:23); double-edged = discerning old/new covenants (Heb. 4:12).
- The stabbing: Christ's victory over Satan at the cross (disrupting the "circle" of death); sword sinking into bowels = old creation's futility exposed; filth = Satan's defeated state (head crushed, Gen. 3:15, yet world unaware until revelation).
- Rally and victory: Church gathered by trumpet (rapture/resurrection motif); 80 years peace = new creation (8 = resurrection/new beginnings).
- Broader: Shift from law's oppression to grace; believers regard Satan as defeated, living in victory.

Eglon, the person who got killed, is the personification of Satan himself. In Hebrew, the word Eglon means round or a circle, as Eglon’s waist was solid. Any circle portrays eternity as it closes in on itself, but when Eglon’s waist got pierced by a sword, the circle of his belly was disrupted. The circle used to be closed, but the sword disembowelled him. What used to be destined for eternity got disrupted. Satan considers himself eternal, and he tries to convey that idea with the symbol of the ouroboros; it is the serpent biting its own tail, forming a circle. Today, that circular serpent is mainly noticed on the armbands people wear. Satan is a great imitator, as the real serpent is Christ, for when we look up at the raised serpent we will live (John 3:14), and similar to the golden calf of Aaron. In Hebrew, the word Eglon is also translated as ‘a calf’, and the golden calf was used in

Israel's idolatry, and that too epitomises Satan, who is the great rival of Christ. In the end, the calf (Eglon) was pulverised to dust, similar to the golden calf of Aaron, interrupting the circle.

The children of Israel served Eglon, king of Moab, for 18 years.
The New Testament familiarises us with the number 18, as twice we stumble on the number 18 in Luke 13.
'And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.' (Luke 13:4–5)
At Siloam in Jerusalem, there used to be a fountain of water named Shiloah, and Isaiah mentioned it (Isa. 8:6). The tower of Siloam that may have been a tower near or over the Pool of Siloam collapsed, and it killed 18 men. The water at Siloam portrays the Word of God or the laws as given by Moses. In itself, it cannot heal, but if the water of the old covenant is blended with the clay, it can heal, as with the blind man (John 9). Our Lord spat on the ground and made clay with His saliva; He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and he had to wash himself at the pool. He returned seeing. The tower at Siloam is meant to get us to God, and it is similar to the tower at Babylon. The old covenant is a tower, a means to get us to God, and it is similar to the tower the men built in the vineyard (Matt. 21:33).
The way to God is via the tower of Siloam, and the means of Israel reaching God is via the law. The 18 men epitomise Israel as living under the curse of the law. There is great danger of collapse, and if the people of Israel refuse to repent or to have their eyes smeared with the clay, they will be blinded, and the tower that used to direct the people to God will fall on them. The latent power of the fall will pulverise Israel to the ground. They are restricted and unable to reach God, and Moses will be judging them. They need to invite Christ to heal them.
Later in the chapter, our Lord saw a woman who had been crippled by an evil spirit. She had been bent double for eighteen years and was unable to stand up straight (Luke 13:11). Twice it says she was bent for 18 years, and later in verse 16 it says that the woman is Israel or a daughter of Abraham. Satan crippled her for 18 years. Is it not fitting for the disabled woman to be healed and to be set free on the Sabbath day? The 18 is related to the oppression or whatever tied her down.
The first time the 18 is mentioned, it is in the Book of Judges, as Israel served the Moabites for 18 years.
They were ensnared, as the woman was crippled and bent down.
The other time the number 18 is mentioned is the height of one of the pillars in the temple of Solomon, but not the other pillar. When referring to the other pillar, only the width is mentioned, since it may also be 18 cubits high.
'He cast two pillars of bronze. 18 cubits was the height of one pillar, and a line of 12 cubits measured its circumference.' (1 Kings 7:15)
The first pillar epitomises the law, and the second pillar, that is only known by its width, denotes the time of God's grace. The first pillar

conveys the truths of the old covenant, and the second pillar the truths regarding the new covenant.
For 18 years, the woman was oppressed by Satan, and in the history of Ehud, Israel lived in bondage. We have a choice, and certainly we do need to be born again by the waters of Siloam. The clay and the water will heal us, or else we will be oppressed by the law, and we will die with the tower collapsing on us. With the 18—the old covenant, the dispensation of the law, or the rule of Satan—ended, and surely we need dire deliverance.
'But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, the Lord again raised up a rescuer to save them. His name was Ehud the son of Gera, a left-handed man of the tribe of Benjamin.' Howbeit, Israel called on the Name of the Lord, and He delivered them via Ehud, who was left-handed. The Book of Judges had notable men, as Ehud was left-handed. Their defect portrays Christ in a distinguished way. In the Hebrew language, the name Ehud means to be united or one. He is reminiscent of Christ, who will bond us and make the two one; all things will be brought together in Him.
'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' (Gal. 3:28)
Wherever Christ is, there will be unity, and we will find each other in Him. We are one with Him and are placed with Christ far above any rule, authority, power, or any title on earth (Eph. 1:21).
Ehud was the son of Gera, and Gera is derived from the word sojourner. Ehud was a stranger, and the people could not easily place him. That is similar to our Lord, as the people thought He was a Samaritan or a stranger—different to what they perceived. He came from the outside, and He remained outside, and certainly He was not part of the Jewish religious structure. They felt on edge when they approached Him.
He was the son of Benjamin, but he was left, even though in Hebrew the name Benjamin means 'the son on my right hand'. The irony is that he was left-handed. Benjamin is the last-born son of Jacob and the remnant of Israel. In the Bible, the tribe of Benjamin portrays the remnant Israel, who in the end time will enter the Millennium. In the latter chapters of the Book of Judges, they were nearly alienated. The redeemer will descend from the remnant, and even our Lord was born at Bethlehem on the borders of Judah and Benjamin. The first king (Saul) was from Benjamin, and the second (David) from Judah. Paul was from Benjamin, and he regarded it as a gain, as figuratively speaking he was a type of the remnant.
Ehud being left-handed happened to be his prominent feature. In the Bible, the right hand is right or correct, and it has to do with justice or the Word of God; it is like raising the two fingers of our right hand. The right has to do with spiritual and heavenly matters. The left is wrong, and it has to do with earthly matters. In short, the right has to do with heaven, and the left with the earth. Our Redeemer will come from the right or heaven, and even today we are told to yield to the traffic coming from our right side.

If the right or the left is not distinguished, it may be noticed by what is either east or west. The east is from the origin or God, or the right side; it is everything coming from God, as the law.
Our Lord came from heaven or the right, and whatever He did on earth was with His left hand. He became man and took the form of a man, having no reputation. His humiliated life on earth is expressed by using His left hand.
Redemption comes from the right, but He accomplished it via the left. From the wrong side or from the left, He entered death, and via the humiliation or the cross He opened the way to the right. Now there is an escape route via the deepest Hades to heaven or to the right—He triumphed over the deep. When our Lord was on earth and left hanging on the cross, Satan thought He was 'left behind' or abandoned; he thought he got rid of Him. He was pleasantly surprised!
The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tribute money to King Eglon of Moab. It was not a pleasant idea for the people of Israel to give to Eglon their hard-earned money and taxes. In the previous warfare, the people were not killed but rather they were milked of their wealth. Yearly the money went to Eglon, and this time it would be their last.
So Ehud made a double-edged sword, and it was one cubit long. In Hebrew, the word Ehud means undivided or in union. Here, Ehud was in total harmony with the sword, and it symbolises the union he had with the Word of God.
'For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.' (Heb. 4:12) It discerns the differences between the old and the new covenant, cutting asunder the old. Paul says we need to handle the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The swords in the Bible are always two-edged or sharp at both ends, as it blesses the new and judges the old. When Moses descended down the mountain with the stone tablets, it says that the tablets were written on both sides: on the front and the back (Ex. 32:15). There were two aspects of the Word of God, and we will discover that the one is the obvious and the other the mysteries of His will. It unfolds the hidden and the revealed truths of God or the old and the new.
Ehud strapped the sword to his right thigh, keeping it hidden beneath his clothing. He was left, but he hid the sword on his right side. There is a greater meaning to the word thigh than the obvious, as the thigh denotes procreation and new life. In Hebrew, the word thigh is our abundance, as it symbolises life and procreation. The sword hanging on the right hip is the eternal Word of God. 'For we have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God.' (1 Pet. 1:23)
Our Lord said, 'Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning, to be prepared to meet Him' (Luke 12:35). To be girded is to be prepared. When Jacob fought with the angel, it was God who touched his thigh.
Since then he was sterile, but miraculously Benjamin was later born. That same night he touched God, and his name got changed to Israel, meaning Jacob will triumph with God (Gen. 32:25). It says Eglon was fat and relaxed in comfort, as Satan who was adorned in glory. It is said of Satan that he

was blameless in all he did from the day he was created until the day evil was found in him (Ezek. 28:15). Similarly, Eglon was girded in comfort as Satan, but that would be short-lived.

After Ehud delivered the payment to Eglon, he was sent home with those who helped him to carry the proceeds. He went a short distance with his party of men, but promptly returned to Eglon once he reached the idols that were at Gilgal.

When he approached Eglon, he said, ‘O king, I have a secret message for you,’ and he asked for privacy. All the people close to them left until Eglon and Ehud were alone in the room. Gilgal means to be reborn or a turnabout, and in essence Ehud returned from that place. At Gilgal, Israel crossed the River Jordan, where they erected 12 x 2 large stones: 12 inside the river and 12 beside the River Jordan. At the time of Ehud, the enemies may have replaced them with their idols. From that place, Joshua conquered the land of Canaan, and from that moment in time Joshua always planned his battles from Gilgal; from there he prepared himself for any future battle. Ehud did the same and speedily returned to Eglon. He returned to Eglon in privacy. Now the two enemies faced each other, as Satan and the Lord Jesus on the mountain (Matt. 4:8). At that moment, Ehud was subjected to Eglon, and it was similar to the Lord Jesus when He faced Satan on the high mountain. When Satan was created as a Cherub, he controlled the earth, and the Lord was subjected to him. Yes, on earth our Lord was placed lower on the ladder than Satan. Yet He refused to obey Satan, and we need to be mindful that our Lord was made lower than the gods or the angels in Psalm 8 (Heb. 2:7, 9). Ehud was the humiliated one when he approached Eglon, sitting on a large and comfortable couch. As Satan, he was conceited, and he esteemed himself greater than God (Ezek. 28:9). As in Isaiah 14:13, it says that Satan with all his riches will be hurled to the ground.

He went to Eglon, and frankly Ehud told him, ‘I have a message from God for you!’ Eglon must have tried to hoist himself from the couch to determine what it could be.

Figuratively speaking, the Word of God is the sword. Ehud reached with his left hand and pulled out the sword strapped to his right thigh and plunged it deep into the king’s belly. When he pierced him with a double-edged sword, he must have told him, ‘Here is the Word of God.

’In the history of David and Goliath, the champions approached each other, and David had the five stones or the living Word of God; the stones in the water (Word of God) caused the victory, as the fifth stone (Christ) portrays the ‘kill’ or turnabout of our dispensation.

In the Book of Revelation, it speaks of a sword that will proceed from His mouth. It will devour the people, as it is the Word of God (Rev. 19:15). It could be the fire from the prophet’s mouth (Rev. 11:5) or the sword in his left hand, as the humiliated will defeat the great enemy.

When our Lord walked on earth, the only weapon He had was the Word of God. When He was confronted by Satan, He continually said, ‘For it is written,’ as a sword that continually projected from His mouth.

The sword went so deep that the handle disappeared beneath the king's fat belly. So Ehud did not withdraw the sword, and the king's bowels emptied with all its filth.
In Hebrew, the word bowel could either be translated as the word belly, heart, or uterus, as it is the seat of our emotions, distress, or love. David pictured this in his Psalms (40:8):'I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my bowels.'
Whatever we accumulate on earth will disappear, and what Satan accomplished via the old creation will vanish in a great fire. The sword disappeared within the bowels of the man, determining our fate. The old covenant in itself will never generate anything good or lasting, and with Christ's resurrection the complete sword of God sank deep into the bowels of the 'old'.
When the sword sliced deep into his belly, his faeces putrefied the room. Once Satan was defeated with Christ's death on the cross, he can only procure offensive things.
Then Ehud closed and locked the doors of the room, and he escaped via an exit door in the rear.
After Ehud left, the king's servants returned and found the doors locked. They thought he might be resting, so they left him peacefully. They did not grasp he was dead. When the king didn't come out after a long delay, they became concerned, and they unlocked the door. When they did, they found their master dead on the floor.
The above verses vividly portray Satan in our dispensation. For the past 2,000 years, Satan has been dead, and the world is totally oblivious of that. The snake's head is crushed, and the world assumes the serpent is still alive. Its body may recoil, but don't be alarmed. After the rapture of the Church, the world will understand the events. Indeed, Satan's head is crushed, and strangely the world deems him as alive.
After a long time of waiting, they opened the doors and found him dead on the floor. That is equated to the time after the rapture, when the world will open the door to stare at the defeated Satan, thrown to earth.
While the servants were waiting, Ehud escaped. He ran past the idols and escaped to Seirah. When he arrived there, he blew a trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went down with him from the hills, and he was their leader.
The word Seirah is related to the word Seir, and we are familiar with the word, as Esau can be translated as Seir or hairy. He was born before Jacob. In the New Testament, Esau is contrasted to the Church (Heb. 12:16), as it says that Esau had the firstborn right, but he disregarded them and he did not comply with them. He was careless, and we are warned to treasure our inheritance above the things of the world.
In the following verse, Ephraim is mentioned, as he is the real firstborn amongst the 12 nations of Israel. His name means 'double fruit', and that portrays the Church. When Ehud was on the mountain, he blew the trumpet, and the nation of Israel heeded his call. In the future, when the Church is gathered, the trumpet will blast. That will also happen at the time of Israel's repentance. Later, during the great tribulation, the seven trumpets will sound to gather the remaining nations from the entire world.

In that history, Ehud is proclaimed as Israel’s rescuer, and that happened on the mountains of Ephraim. It is the calling of the Church, who is seated with Christ in the heavens.
Then he led a band of Israelites down from the hills. He said, ‘Follow me, for the Lord has given them victory over the Moabites.’ They followed him.
The shepherd will lead the sheep across the River Jordan, and the first to cross the River Jordan is the Church; they are the first to enter the water and to be reborn; they will judge the world. Once they crossed the river, they ensured no enemy escaped crossing the waters. They seized the fords of the River Jordan leading to Moab and did not allow anyone across the river. They attacked the Moabites and killed about 10,000 of their strongest and ablest warriors. Not one of them escaped. On that day, Moab lost, and since then, for 80 years Israel had peace on their borders.
The ‘One’ or Ehud procured the judgement, and not even one man escaped the sword.
The number eight portrays the eighth day, and it is the new creation in Christ.
Our Lord is from heaven, and via His death He defeated Satan; Ehud fixed the sword to his right hip, and he used it with his left hand; he epitomises our victory. All we need to do is to believe in the victory of the sword and to regard Eglon or Satan as dead, even though the world assumes him to be alive.

Judges 4 & 5
Jabin was the Canaanite king during the time of Deborah. Sisera was the commander of Jabin's army. The Canaanite army was the superpower of the day. It could boast of 900 iron chariots. Jabin literally ruled the people of Israel with cruelty and violence for 20 years. This is the frustrating situation Deborah found herself in.
Deborah is introduced first as a prophetess (4:4). She was very similar to Moses in many respects. God had previously promised Moses that He would raise up prophets when they got into the Promised Land (Deut. 18:15–22). Deborah was one of them.
As a woman, Deborah was not the only prophetess in the Old Testament. There were several: Miriam (Ex. 15:20), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), Noadiah (Neh. 6:14), and Isaiah's unnamed wife (Isa. 8:3).
Deborah was a judge in Israel. The people came to her to have their disputes settled (4:4).

How Satan Is Defeated

Deborah foreshadows Satan's ultimate defeat through Christ's cross and the Church's participation:

- Jabin (discerner/wise one) → Antichrist or Satan-inspired worldly wisdom (Gen. 3:5 promise to Eve).
- Sisera (engraver/craftsman) → False prophet/second beast (Rev. 13), technological/man-made power limited to the old creation; 900 iron chariots → Brutal final kingdom (Dan. 2 iron legs).
- 20 years oppression → Dualistic fallen world under toil.
- Deborah (bee/word) → Manifestation of God's Word on earth (Isa. 55:11); Israel as bearer of oracles/light, under palm (resurrected remnant).
- Barak (lightning) → Christ as flashing judge/light to darkness (Heb. 11 faith hall of fame).
- The battle → God's sovereign rout; victory not by human might but divine intervention.

The climax shifts to Heber and Jael (Kenites, outsiders) → The Church: Gentiles grafted in (Eph. 2:12 aliens now near), living in tents outside the world (Heb. 13:13), sharing Israel's blessings without being Israel.

- Sisera seeks refuge in Jael's tent → Satan mistakenly thinks the Church is no threat (or even allied against Israel).
- Milk instead of water → Perishable old covenant vs. living Word.
- Tent peg through temple → Fatal head wound (echoing Gen. 3:15 bruise on serpent's head); parallels nail through Christ's hands → Victory at the cross (Col. 2:15 disarming powers). The "hammer" (piercer) and peg fix Satan's "head" to the ground in defeat.

Glory goes to the "woman" (Jael/Church) → Believers share Christ's triumph (Rom. 16:20 crush Satan under your feet).

Natural Israel (Deborah/Barak) supports but doesn't claim final honour—pointing to end-times where the Church participates in victory before Israel's full restoration.

This "brilliant history" illustrates divine irony: Satan, armed with worldly might, is defeated not by strength but by humble obedience and the "weak" (a woman, a peg)—ultimately through Christ's humiliation and resurrection. Believers today live in that victory, awaiting full manifestation.

Israel's deliverance from the oppression of the Canaanites began when Deborah summoned Barak. Speaking as a prophet, she told him to assemble 10,000 troops from some of the tribes of Israel. She prophesied that Sisera would come and attack Barak and his army, and that Sisera would be defeated. Sisera had a well-equipped army with iron chariots. It all sounded like a suicide mission for Barak.

It is not surprising, then, that Barak insisted that Deborah come along with him (4:8–10). Her presence would encourage the hastily picked troops he was to assemble. Even he knew that confidence and faith in God's promise were vital for victory.

Deborah was keen to escort the army of men, and she was the first and only woman judge of Israel. She had real faith in God, reciting the words: ‘Does not the Lord go out before you?’ (4:14).

In these chapters, Sisera, the commander of his army, got killed, and he is the main subject of this chapter. Jabin got killed, but it is not clear how it happened.

The Canaanites were the main enemies of Israel, and they too were a ‘brother nation’ of Israel, long before the time of Abraham. Israel had a long list of enemies, namely the Amalekites, the Amorites, and the Edomites, and we ought to know that the main enemies of Israel were usually their own brothers.

Ham, the father of Canaan, was the second son of Noah and the brother of Shem. Abraham was a descendant from Shem. Following the flood of Noah, Shem was the chosen descendant and not Ham. When Israel entered the land of Canaan, they had many enemies, namely the Canaanites, the Amorites, and many more; and at certain times the brother nations of Abraham amalgamated into one huge army. I believe, in the near future, the greatest enemy of Israel—or the antichrist—will be a Philistine, an Amalekite, and they are an Arabian nation. The Amalekites were the first enemy of Israel (Ex. 17:8), and they will prove to be the great obstacle when Christ returns to earth.

The Israelites were enslaved to the Canaanites, and Jabin reigned at Hazor. The word Jabin means ‘to discern, understand, or consider’. He is an accomplished person and knowledgeable.

Jabin was skilful, and Satan inspired him, as he previously did to Eve, when she ate from the forbidden fruit. Satan promised Eve she would become like God, knowing everything, both good and evil (Gen. 3:5). Projecting this to the future, we can argue that Jabin is the antichrist and Sisera the second beast in Revelation 13. King Jabin’s commander was Sisera.

They worked in unison. He is placed beneath his commander Jabin—or Satan himself.

Sisera lived at Harosheth, and the root verb of his name means to engrave, to cut into something. It is used for metalwork or engraving on a tablet, or for ploughing; it is a skilful art. Whatever is made by the artisan, it can enhance its value. Somehow he portrays the technological skills in our world today, but all the skills we have will not better our genetic pool, as all our achievements go hand in hand with the working of Satan. God can create a ‘new creation’, but not Satan, who is fixed by the limitations

of the old, and it will never progress. Sisera is an example of the evil powers that are now in heaven, and they decide our earthly resolutions and destiny.
The Israelites cried unto the Lord, as Jabin had 900 iron chariots, and he was ruthless. He afflicted the Israelites for 20 years. In Daniel 2, we read that iron conveys the brutal military force (Dan. 2:40). Similarly, the iron will be the last kingdom of the world. Nothing on earth decays or rusts better than iron. There were 900 chariots, and hyssop—The 20 years in which Israel laboured has to do with our world of two. Our fallen world of seven is burdened by the toil and the sweat.
At that time, Deborah was a prophetess, and simply put, Deborah in Hebrew means a bee, and that word is similar to the word ‘dabar’ or the spoken Word of God.
The Word or dabar is Christ, and if that is used in the feminine, as with Deborah, it expresses the masculine or the noticeable attributes of His power on earth, and what emanates from God. Dabar is an idea and impossible to define. It is spiritual, and when that is perceived on earth, it is known as Deborah. She is the Word, and that Word is revealed to us by the prophet.
‘So is my Word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.’ (Isa. 55:11)
Deborah portrays Israel, as they are entrusted with the Word of God. The word dabar means bar or a bee. In Hebrew, the word bee and the word ‘dabar’ are similar. If the ‘dabar’ lives in a hive, the bees are nestled in the Word of God. The male bee is an example of Christ, and the female bee portrays Israel. The bee lives in a hexagon or in a six-sided honeycomb, reminding us of the six-pointed Star of David. The bee lives in the David star or in Israel that is entrusted with the Word of God.
Deborah lived at Lapidoth. Lapid means a torch, and that torch was also given to Gideon. The father of lights is Christ, and here Deborah portrays Israel as the bearer of light. Israel is the woman or the bride of God, and it is curious as Deborah was seated beneath the palm tree.
Deborah held court under the palm trees between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim. All of Israel went to her to have their disputes settled (Judg. 4:5). Tamar means a palm tree, and that tree portrays the living remnant of God. The palm tree is a slender stem that is crowned with many leaves, and as it grows, its canopy stretches towards heaven. It has an elevated crown to shelter the believers beneath its branches.
Ramah means a hill or a high place. Rimmon is the high place, and that is where the children of Benjamin used to hide themselves (Judg. 20). Rimmon is similar to the word pomegranate, a fruit that portrays our dispensation with its many purple-coloured seeds. See notes on the priest.
Bethel is the house of God, and Deborah is coupled with both those two cities. Today, if any person accepts Christ’s teachings, he will be taught on a high place at the house of God. Today, the Church is the ‘house of God’. Bethel is also associated with Jacob or the 12 tribes of Israel and not only the Church. In that history, we have a remnant that portrays our dispensation, as they lived high in the mountains of Ephraim, and they

prize the firstborn right that was endowed to Ephraim, but today their blessings are now fulfilled in the Church. Deborah was the prophetess, and the people sought her knowledge or judgement. If any had a discord amongst themselves, they went to the judge or Deborah—or the 'Word'. Deborah called for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-Naphtali and told him:

'Has not the Lord commanded you to gather the men at Mount Tabor, taking 10,000 from the people of Naphtali and Zebulun?' (4:6)

The name Barak means a lightning flash, and to Israel he will be a shining light: to those who live in darkness. Each judge that is named in the Book of Judges and also named in the Book of Hebrews ch. 11 denotes Christ. Barak is named by Paul as being a true example of someone having real faith in God. He was the son of Abinoam, meaning 'my father is a delight'. Indirectly, Barak is the enchanting light of God. He is a type of Christ, and besides, the 'lightning' conveys him as the judge who will rule the nations. Likewise, we can compare him to Gideon, who lighted the dark when he broke the clay pot. Barak lived at Kedesh-Naphtali. Naphtali means to wrestle, and Kadesh means holy or to set apart as holy. Kedesh-Naphtali denotes a sacred warfare, and that is precisely what Christ is doing for us right now. Deborah had the Word, and she called for Barak, and he deemed her words truthful, and he went to Mount Tabor. At that mount, our Lord also preached, as the Sea of Galilee lies within the borders of Naphtali. They went to the River Kishon to confront their enemy Sisera. Kishon means 'winding' and to lure or to lay a bait, to ensnare someone. A trap is set like a tension wire ready to strike a mouse. Satan is known to twist the light or the light of God's Word. Sisera will stumble, as accidentally he will walk head-on into the snare that is set by God. Later, history did repeat itself when Elijah slew the prophets of Baal at the brook Kishon (1 Kings 18:40). 'Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go."' (v. 7) Barak portrays Christ, and Deborah denotes the believing remnant amongst the Israelites who faithfully adhered to the Word of God. Via Israel, we did receive the Word of God, and Deborah was not there to be his servant but rather to support him with the Word of God. Similarly, in future, at the end of Israel's tribulation, Christ—or 'the Word'—will lead the Israelites from Petra to Jerusalem (Isa. 63). Whoever is faithful to His Words will also be led by Him.

'She said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the honour shall not be yours on the journey that you are about to take, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hands of a woman."

Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.' (v. 8) That is strange, as the fate of Sisera will not be secured by either Deborah or Barak but rather by another woman. The total victory will not be theirs. Likewise, in the near future, when Israel returns with Christ from Petra to claim the once-besieged city of Jerusalem, the victory will not be theirs, but rather it will be endowed to another nation or people known as the Church.

That may sound absurd, but both Jael and Heber snatched the victory, and together they epitomise the Church. They were the heathen people and unknown by the Israelites!
The victory over Sisera will be clinched by a woman. Barak called two tribes, namely Zebulun and Naphtali, to help him. Together they went on foot to face their enemy, and amongst them they had 10,000 warriors. From verse 11, the sway of the chapter changes, as the focus of the battle shifted to another family, portraying the Church. Now Heber was a heathen and a Kenite. He distanced himself from the other Kenites, who were the descendants of Hobab, who was Moses' father-in-law.
Hobab, Moses' father-in-law, had many names, and his other name was Jethro, or Reuel. They were known as the Midianites.
The Kenites portray Cain, who killed Abel: killing Abel did not help Cain, as his inheritance went to Seth, his other brother.
The Kenites were the first brother nation of Israel, and he stemmed from Midian, who was Abraham’s son. Heber wisely distanced himself from that nation, and he lived a secluded life. Heber had nothing to do with the Israelites, but he lived in their vicinity. He pictures the Church, as he did share in the blessings of Israel, even though he was not born an Israelite. He lived in tents and also without the city gates, or outside the commune of the world (Heb. 13:13). He pitched his tent at the plains at Kedesh, which was one of the cities of refuge at Naphtali. The plains denote the strong and hardy trees and especially the oak tree, and many ancient versions of the Bible agree with that. Even Abraham loved to rest beneath the oak tree, and the tree with its acorns denotes our dispensation. The acorn vividly epitomises our circumcision in Christ.
The men with Barak gathered at the river at Kishon, and early in the morning Deborah told them to rise, as now would be a day of victory. Barak was eager to battle, but they soon discovered that the Lord had slain the army of Sisera.
Today there is a similar message: if we think we can defeat our enemy, we need to appreciate that only Christ can accomplish that. Many are offended, thinking they alone can procure a victory. It is absurd to think that we can fight and conquer the 900 chariots of iron. We need to trust Christ, as He will achieve the victory. It is not our doing but Christ’s. Barak advanced to them, and the enemy succumbed. Sisera left his chariot and ran away. Barak chased and killed the complete army except Sisera.
Unknowingly to Israel, Sisera fled to the household of Heber and his wife Jael. Foolishly, Sisera thought he could trust the Kenites. In Hebrew, the word Jael means to climb, and it illustrates any creature that tends to scale the heights, as a mountain goat. Many mammals have that tendency. Jael is the woman that will be exalted. The wife of Heber (Jael) is the Church, and similarly we also live in tents outside in the desert. We do live on earth, yet we live outside the commune. The Church could also be feminine in relation to Christ, and it is substantiated in this chapter. The name Heber is mentioned, and typologically he can be regarded as the ‘Christ’ in heaven. By nature, the Church (Jael) is not Israel, as we are part of a heathen nation, and we had no future.

‘That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.’ (Eph. 2:12) Sisera was fooled, thinking that Jael (Church) were the enemies of Israel or the Jews. We are not anti-Semitic. Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, ‘Come into my tent and don’t be afraid.’ So he went into her tent, and she covered him with a blanket. Sisera asked for a little water, but she gave him some milk to drink and covered him again with the blanket. He asked for water, but she gave him milk (5:25).
She did not give him the water or the Word of God, but rather the milk. Milk denotes the perishable things, but honey the incorruptible.
‘In a bowl fit for kings, she brought him cream.
With her left hand she reached for a tent peg, and with her right hand she reached for the workman's hammer.
She hit Sisera and crushed his head. She pounded the tent peg through his head,
piercing his temples.’
Instead of doing him good, she gave him milk to drink. Water as wine denotes the incorruptible or the Word of God, and milk, with a numerical value of 40, denotes the corruptible. Milk becomes sour with the yeast, and like yogurt it is short-lived.
Jael took a tent peg and a ‘hammer’?
The word hammer is only found twice in the Bible, and the other time the word is used, it is translated as a hollow (Isa. 51:1).
It was no hammer, but the word means to pierce or perforate.
She clasped a tent peg in the hollow of both her hands, and with the sheer thrust she pierced his skull. The peg stapled his head to the ground. It pierced both temples and the thinnest bone structure of the skull. In a ‘deep sleep’, his head got fixed to the ground!
When Barak went around looking for Sisera, Jael went out to meet him. She showed him the man he searched for. He followed her into the tent and found Sisera lying dead, with the tent peg through his temple. The greatest victory is endowed to both Jael and Heber (Church) and not Deborah and Barak, who portray natural Israelites. In the following chapter, Deborah is hailed, and it is known as the song of Deborah.
In verse 26, the word hammer stems from a word meaning to strike. She did that forcefully. The same tool we used to secure our tent to the earth benefited her to defeat the enemy. With one sweep using the hollow of her hand, Satan is given a death blow. The hollow of Jael’s hand relates to the hollow of our Lord’s hand, when they pierced them with a nail. Christ’s victory is our victory, and Satan’s fate was sealed with the death of Sisera.

Judges 6 - 8
Gideon

When Israel left Egypt, they left behind a life of slavery. Once they crossed the Red Sea, they enjoyed freedom. They did not enter the Promised Land directly, but they sojourned through the desert. Similarly, we too are

freed, and while in the desert we need to be patient until Christ returns for us.
On earth, we have no king, but to us Christ does reign. Our slavery to the law ended when we were redeemed with Christ's resurrection, as Israel did flee Egypt.
Our slavery ended, and now we are competent to worship God. If any judge is named in the Bible, Gideon is usually the first to strike us, but he is not the first, as in total there were 15 judges. The first 10 verses of this chapter familiarise us with the neighbouring enemies of Israel, and from verse 11 onwards the Lord Himself appeared to them.
The Book of Romans 1:18 has a similar structure, as it commences with the ungodliness of our world and why God is wrathful to those who suppress His Word. The majority today suppress the Word of God, and only a small minority are obedient. Gideon had to acquaint himself with the enemy, and he had to find the reason why God was furious.
He searched for the truth, and he found it. Now it is common to hear the question: why does a 'God of love' allow all the miseries in our world today? The question is unfair, as we ought to ask what God did do for us, and not what He 'didn't do for us'.
At the time of Gideon, as today, the people reject the truth, and yet they are not pleased with all the judgements He procures. The wrath of God is assured, and daily we will discover it when we read our newspapers. Many fail to understand, as the Israelites who were punished were happy to continue with a life of slavery.
Now our world rejects Christ, and understandably He withdrew Himself, and they do not know where to find Him. When Christ ascended into heaven, He left His Name, and we can call on Him at any moment
. 'Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.' (Acts 4:12)

Gideons faith weaves a Christ-centered typology, aligning with traditions seeing Judges as foreshadowing redemption:

- 7 years oppression → Completeness of judgment under law/old creation (7 = worldly completeness); believers escape into the "eighth day" (new creation/resurrection, Sunday rest, Heb. 4).
- Midianites (strife/conflict, Abraham's sons via Keturah) → Flesh/old man under law; brother-nations highlight internal spiritual conflict, not just external.
- Amalekites → Perpetual natural man/flesh (war "generation to generation," Ex. 17:16).
- Palestinians/Gaza → Indwelling sin/old man, always accompanying but opposing the spirit.
- Children of the east/Amorites → Demonic principalities/powers (Eph. 6:12), inspiring worldly wisdom/gods; pre-Adamic fallen influences tainting creation.
- Enemies as "brothers" → Closest threats are fleshly (law, self-reliance), not distant paganism.
- Gideon (cutter/hewer) → Type of humbled Christ/apostle (Paul-like dependence); threshing in winepress → Hidden preparation of new covenant life (wheat/grain = resurrection body; wine = blood/new covenant).
- Oak at Ophrah → Resurrection/circumcision oath (acorn exposes seed like Col. 2:11); Abraham's encounter foreshadows faith inheritance.
- Angel of the Lord → Pre-incarnate Christ/Jehovah; meal consumed by fire → Accepted offering, ascension fragrance.
- Tearing down Baal/Asherah → Rejecting false gods/self-effort; second bull (7 years old) → Ending old oppression, entering new creation.
- Fleece signs:
    - Wet fleece/dry ground → Natural Israel blessed with Word/dew (heavenly revelation) first.
    - Dry fleece/wet ground → Blessings shift to Gentiles/Church; salvation to those "not seeking" (Rom. 10–11; Isa. 65:1).
- Army reduction/300 → Divine strength in weakness (not by might); lapping like dogs → Humble vigilance.
- Trumpets, jars, torches → Spirit's power shattering flesh (jars), revealing light (Christ in believers), proclaiming Word (trumpet voice).

The "remarkable turnaround" is God's pattern: Humiliation → faith → divine intervention → victory/rest. Gideon's story points to Christ's cross (weakness/apparent defeat) yielding resurrection triumph, shared by believers now (regarding enemies as defeated) and fully at His return.

No other name on earth will save us. Our Lord did many good works on earth and healed many people, but the people rejected and crucified Him. He distanced Himself from the influential religious leaders and preferred to be acquainted with the adulterers and tax collectors, who were the scum of society.

We need a promising Gospel to grant us real life from a righteous God. The good message is not that God will judge the world, but rather that He will save any person who is willing to call on His Name.

God is righteous, and He settled our sin, and it happened with Christ's death and resurrection. He is merciful and rich in grace, but with His eminent return He will reveal His wrath to those who ridicule His grace. Before we accepted Christ, we were aware of the world's bleak future, but He pulled us out from the sinking sands.

'He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps.' (Ps. 40:2)

Even before Gideon is named, God stressed the sad state of Israel. Israel lived amongst many enemies, and the reason is they did what was wrong in the eyes of the Lord. To do what is good in the eyes of God is not to adhere to the laws of Moses, but rather to remain faithful to His Word. The Israelites did what was evil in the Lord's sight, and for seven years they were enslaved to the Midianites.

For God, a real son is someone who believes in Him as Abraham did, and not Israel, who did wrong in God's eyes. A real Israelite is a believer who trusts God. Jacob experienced this as he believed in God, but he did not trust Him totally. Once he repented after wrestling with God, his name was changed from Jacob to Israel. Once the Angel—or the Lord—struck Jacob on his hip, injuring him as he became lame on one side and infertile, then it caused him to be dependent and fit for God's service. He is then regarded as a believer, and his faith earned him that name. Israel is the Jacob that believed. We can only inherit as a believer from father Abraham if we believe in God's promises. Every believer shares in Abraham's faith, and we all share in the promises of Christ.

'Just as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Understand then that those who have faith are children of Abraham.' (Gal. 3:6–7)

God expected the Israelites to be believers like Jacob, and failing that they would be considered as the brother nations of Israel, e. g. the Edomites and the other Arabian countries. That is the reason why the Lord allowed the Midianites to rule over them for seven years. They spoiled their land, but they did not take them captive. The Israelites may have questioned God, doubting why He allowed them to be burdened by the Midianites. When Israel called on the name of the Lord, He sent someone. If Israel refused Him, the enemy would have oppressed them even more, and that would not have been the Lord's doing but their own. It is not the strength of their armoury that changes things.

The Lord assured Moses, 'He will fight for them' (Ex. 14:14).

Gideon only used clay jars and torches to defeat his enemies and depended on the power of His Word and not his weaponry.

Israel transgressed the covenant by not adhering to His Word, and He allowed the Midianites to invade their borders. It took them seven years to acknowledge their mistakes, and once they called on His Name, He intervened for them.

The Book of Joel reflects a period at the end of Daniel's 70th week, a critical time at the end of the seven years of great tribulation, when they will call on His Name. Seven is the number related to Christ's redemptive work for the world, and once the seven is fulfilled, then God's salvation will be settled. That is reflected in the history of Gideon and similarly in our world of 'seven'. Once we accepted Christ, we are not part of the 'sevens', and fortunately for us today we skipped 'sevens' to be part of the eight or the new creation.

Israel needs to surpass the 'sevens', whether it is the 7 x 1,000 years, the seven dispensations of our world, or the seven years of the great tribulation; for then the suffering of Israel or our world will end.

In this history, the obstacle was the Midianites who oppressed Israel. History will repeat itself on the 'day of the Lord' when Israel will call on the Lord. That is substantiated by Joel:

'And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' (Joel 2:32)

Paul said in the Book of Hebrews chs. 3 and 4 that if we call on His Name, we will find the promised rest, and we are already part of it. There is always rest for those who believe in Him (Heb. 4:3).

For us who believe in Christ, each day will be a Sunday. We died to a world branded by the sevens, and for us only the 'eighth day' exists, which is a Sunday. The number eight conveys the new covenant. God does work today, and His work is based on our faith. He spoke to Adam and even during the time of the law; the determining factor was their faith and not their works. The real enemy today is the sin within us, and during Gideon's time the enemies were the Midianites, with other enemies more distant. Altogether they epitomise the working of sin within us.

Verse 3 mentions the Amalekites and the army from the east or the sons of the east (v. 4). Gaza is one of the five Palestinian cities, and in verse 10 the Amorites are named. The Amorites condensed all the enemies of Israel under one name.

We need to notice that the Midianites are the first-called enemies of Israel, as both of them share the same father, Abraham. Abraham had eight sons, but only Isaac was the real firstborn. Besides Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham had six more sons after Isaac was born.

'Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.' (Gen. 25:1–2) Midian was the father of the Midianites.

The brother nations of Israel were the greatest enemies of Israel, whether they are the sons of Abraham or the brothers of Isaac or Jacob. Paul says that the Jews cannot trust their lineage, thinking it will protect them. Being descendants of Abraham will not secure them, as merely Abraham's simple faith secured him eternal salvation.

The believers in Christ are the true sons of Abraham, and that is irrespective of our lineage. It says that:

'In Isaac all the descendants will be blessed.' (Rom. 9:7)

Being a descendant from Abraham does not help us if we fail to believe, as Esau did. The Midianites are the sons of Abraham, but they are not the heirs of Abraham. The word Midian means to conflict or to cause an argument. That portrays the old man that is part of the old covenant. The world is full of strife, and some people seem to feed on that. The law says, 'Do that and you will live,' but we all fail hopelessly.
If we ignore Christ as being the light of the Scriptures, then His Word will become as:
'Order on order, order on order, line on line, line on line, a little here, a little there,' that they may stumble backward, be broken, and taken captive. (Isa. 28:13)
The Midianites portray that conflict, and they need to be outside the city or the land of Canaan, and not inside.
We don't need to be disturbed if the Midianites are outside our borders, but they will forever lurk at the outskirts to seek an opportunity. The trouble commences once they are inside, for then they will cause havoc. If we live a life of faith, the Midianites will remain outside, but once we step outside, the Midianites will invade our borders.
The Midianites can be compared to the wasp, who is the bee's greatest enemy. The bee portrays Israel, as the word bee and dabar (Word) are similar. Both the wasp (Midianites) and the bee (Israel) look similar, as both share the same father, Abraham.
The discord of the Midianites is not within us but outside of us. God disdains the world or the Midianites, and if we reckon with them we will end up arguing with them.
God sent the Midianites to discipline the unfaithful Israelites, and not the other way round. We cannot blame the Midianites, as the Lord caused the punishment, and He allowed the Midianites on their borders. While on earth we will have sin within us, and we will skirmish with them continually, but those who adhere to the Word of God will be rewarded handsomely. Now we can freely enter His rest, or we can work continually to satisfy the demands of the law.
Early in Israel's history, the Midianites are mentioned, when Moses had to flee from Pharaoh (Ex. 2). He went to live in the country of Midian, and the story unfolds when Moses sat at a well. Now a priest from Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water to give to their father's flock. Some shepherds came along and chased them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue, and he gave their flock some water to drink. When the girls returned to Reuel their father, he asked them, 'Why have you returned so early today?' They told their father an Egyptian rescued them from the other shepherds, and he even gave the flock some water. Finally, Reuel or Jethro gave Zipporah, his daughter, in marriage to Moses. The water from the well reflects the Word of God, and it was with Midian. The priest in Midian had seven daughters, and he had the choice of them. We can easily think that Moses was Jacob who met his wife at the well, and similarly Isaac also acquired his wife at the well. Here is a very similar setting, and Moses had to drink of the water, and he wanted to be a priest to Israel, and the priest was Jethro. The priesthood of Jethro can somehow be compared to the priesthood of Melchizedek.

The priesthood of Jethro was recognised even before Aaron was called to be a priest. Jethro became priest before Aaron, and similarly the priesthood of Melchizedek was long before Aaron's priesthood. Later, when Moses had to guide the people of Israel, he obeyed God, but he was also coached by Jethro. Midian portrays the world, and Moses fled to that country, and at the well he found the priest and his wife. Even though they were called the Midianites, they were not hostile towards him. Every believer in the world has possessions, and it can cause conflict, and I am certain Moses differed many a time with his wife. The woman portrays the visible things, and the man portrays the spiritual. The beauty of the woman reflects the unseen things, the spirit or the man. The woman portrays the man. Whenever Moses remained obedient to God, the Midianites did him no harm, and he even had ties with them. Similarly, Ruth was a Moabite, and Solomon's wife was an Ethiopian, and together the women portray the visible attributes of the man, whether it is Boaz or Solomon. The visible world is tainted, and whether the woman is a Midianite or a Moabite, they portray their husband's spiritual attributes. On earth we can accomplish whatever we want, but it will never suffice. We will meet the Midianites or our enemies, and they do not need to suppress us; rather they will teach us to depend on God. If we trust in God and discount our earthly rights, then He will cleanse us. Later, Moses had to leave the Midianites when he had to lead the people of Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan.

In another history, we learn more about the Midianites. They were the Moabites who approached Balaam to curse Israel, who sojourned for 40 years in the desert. The Moabites were also a family from Abraham, as Lot was the father of both the Moabites and the Ammonites; they shared the same father, Lot. Together Abraham and Lot travelled to the land of Canaan. Lot can be regarded as either the father or the grandfather of his two sons, Moab and Ammon. Balaam's efforts proved futile when he tried to curse God's own people. The reason is that God's Word is mightier than his. Balaam thought of another ploy, and that is to end the racial segregation of Israel. He wanted to sell the daughters of the neighbouring countries to Israel, and then Israel would disperse within the surrounding tribes, as with the Moabites. We need to maintain our identity, and even if the Moabites or the Midianites are on the edge of our borders, we need to remain faithful. God warned Israel to preserve their identity, even when the Midianites or the Moabites wanted to contravene.

It is only attributed to Israel's faith that they were the true nation of God, and Ruth realised this when she told her mother-in-law, saying:

'Naomi, I will go wherever you go and live wherever you live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.

'If that is our attitude, we are the true Israelites, and there will be no discord. Ruth became a Jew, and shortly afterwards King David was born from her seed. Balaam wanted to assimilate the Israelites, losing their true heritage. In the New Testament, we are warned against that. We can enjoy many things with the unbelievers, but if that bond becomes too intense, we may be encumbered in the drudgery of the Midianites. Strife is rife in

politics, and that is reflected in their many political conferences to address many issues. It will veer us away from our promised rest.
The New Testament is not shy to tell us about our Balaam:
‘Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.’ (Rev. 2:14)
Balaam wanted to entice the Israelites by giving them food sacrificed to idols. Balaam was a strong political candidate to lure Israel to the heathen.
‘Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.’ (Jude 11)
The way of Cain, Balaam, or Korah were persuaded by their greed for money, and to curse Israel.
Balaam would have been paid handsomely.
‘They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.’ (2 Pet. 2:15)
Many Israelites failed, following the course of Balaam, as he epitomised the greed for money and our world’s short-lived worldly pleasures. Balaam dominated the history of Numbers 22 to 24, and also in Numbers 25:16–18 Moses was told to slay the Midianites.
It is not a common saying of Moses to disregard the nation of which his wife was part.
Israel had to treat them as enemies, because they harassed them.
They were deceitful by tricking them into worshipping the Baal of Peor.
Worshipping Baal is regarded as a marriage between Israel and the Midianites.
In Numbers 31, Israel was told to gather 1,000 warriors from each tribe and to fight the Midianites. Figuratively speaking, complete Israel had to war against them, and then their leader was not a king but the son of the high priest, or Phinehas. Phinehas the son of Eleazar pictures the high-priestly order of the new covenant or Christ.
During the time of Aaron, certain privileges were endowed to his son, as with the offering of the red heifer (Num. 19). Then Eleazar (the second high priest or generation) epitomised Christ as our High Priest, as part of the new covenant. Eleazar was the second high priest, and Phinehas the third high priest; and being the ‘third’, he portrays Christ’s high-priestly duty for us, and even more so the Church than Eleazar, who mostly portrays reborn Israel. Symbolically, Phinehas fought the Midianites as our High Priest. Via the High Priest, the world will be conquered, and the final victory will be executed by the High Priest and not the king. If the king had to fight against the enemy, he might surrender, and that would mean the end of his kingdom.
Phinehas the high priest won the battle, but the enemy is still present. Similarly, Satan was slain with Christ’s resurrection, but he is still roaming about. The hallmark of our dispensation is that the enemy is slain, and we were granted the victory in Christ, but we still need to intermingle with the

enemy. The world will not end to exist, even though we are victorious. Christ's high-priestly task is to equip and to cleanse us, irrespective of our enemy's tactics. The Lord will procure the victory via the 1,000 men from each tribe.

The Midianites were not the only enemy, as the Amalekites also threatened them. Amalek was the grandson of Esau, the brother of Jacob. In Hebrew, Amalek means a people of lapping—and we will discuss them later in Gideon's history. Together they epitomise the natural man, and in essence they do not differ much. In the Bible, the Amalekites are mentioned more often than the Midianites. Agag during the time of Samuel, and Haman the hater of the Jews, were Amalekites. Early in Israel's history, it says that endlessly they will trouble Israel:

'The Lord will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.' (Ex. 17:16)

The Amalekites were the first enemies of Israel and will probably also be the last. The Amalekites are the old natural man. Throughout the time of the kings, the generation of the Amalekites continued, as with Agag during the time of Samuel, and later Haman who conspired against Mordecai and Esther.

He was known as the great hater of the Jewish people.

The struggle of any Christian or reborn Israel will inevitably be against Satan and his powers, and our strength will not suffice. Satan and Amalek are in opposition to God. We are forewarned that our struggle is against the Amalekites from generation to generation, and it will conclude with the demise of the antichrist.

In verse 4, Gaza is named, and that city is one of the five belonging to the Palestinians. The Palestinians were always regarded as the great enemies of Israel, and are mainly named with the other enemies, as the Midianites and the Amalekites. Palestine means a land of sojourners or immigrants. They lived in tents and were wanderers, migrating with the enemies, and today their character is very similar. In short, they epitomise the old man of the believer. They always seem to go hand in hand with the other nations but always in conflict with Israel. They are not a nation like the Ammonites, but they always seem to fight their causes. Hardly ever in the history of the Bible did the Palestinian people fight alone, but they always accompanied the other countries. Their character is similar today, and now they hardly possess any land, and many of them are refugees. They are not the Amalekites or the Amorites, but they always seem to blend with them.

Figuratively speaking, we can say that the Palestinians are inside of us, and we continually tussle with them. The enemy is the sin and our flesh, and forever at war with them until we leave our bodies or die. Wherever we go, they will always be in our midst. If we regard ourselves as the real Israelites, they will be our enemies. The many battles David experienced with the Palestinian people are our battle today.

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers who are in heaven, and that equates to our daily war with the Palestinian people. Our old man is involved with that battle. We can picture that battle when Samson took the gates from Gaza, from the Palestinians or the old man,

and placed them at Hebron, portraying our new life in Christ. He will fight our battles, and we can trust His working within us.
The children of the east or Kedem. They must have been the oldest enemies of Israel as the east portrays a touch of the old, or our former world. On the west of Israel, they had no enemy but a vast sea, but verse 10 describes the eastern people. They are the Amorites: 'I am the Lord your God; do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.' But you have not obeyed My voice. (6:10) We may ask who the Amorites are. They were a nation born from the Canaanites, and they are already mentioned in Genesis 10. Apparently they are the greatest and most powerful of all the nations. They were inclined to listen to the gods of their time, or Satan and his angels, who were Israel's real enemy. In Hebrew, the word Amorites stems from the word 'amar' meaning to speak with the idea to incite the people. The Canaanites were one of Ham's sons and an Amorite was one of his children. It says after four generations Israel's descendants will return to the land, when the sin of the Amorites did run its course (Gen. 15:16). Again it says the sins of the Amorites are dealt with. 'I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.' (Gen. 48:22) They epitomise the powers and the principalities in heaven and today we can sense them. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of that dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Eph. 6:12). Many times we may query what is the source of our world's knowledge and inspiration. They are the principalities in heaven, and they decide the fate of our unbelieving world today. Things happen, and we have no idea how it came about and many agree there is a definite wave of inspiration. Satan is the god of our world, and he holds the sway in his hand. The inspiration is via the gods and we are correctly taught that there is no god, but One – we only regard our God in heaven even if there are many in heaven. We know Christ is God and Satan and his angels are also gods. They do not have the ability to speak, and they remain dumb, but that does not necessarily mean that they have nothing to say (Mark 9:25; Luke 11:14). People continually listen to them or the demons as we understand them today. Many under their influences are addicted to drugs such as morphine and they are especially prone to be lured by his sentiments. They easily distance themselves from their bodies and even punish themselves to succumb to their teachings. In many countries that is more common and acceptable. The inspiration we receive has a twofold foundation – it is either from God or Satan.
The renowned wisdom of the Egyptians and the Greeks and even the pool of our scientific knowledge are directed from them. The Amorites denote the strength of the spiritual beings and in Ephesians 6 they are vividly portrayed. Our armour will suffice against the onslaughts of the Amorites or Satan. I am convinced that the children from the east portray the 'powers' from the beginning (Str. no. 6924). They are the powers that triggered the collapse of our former world, the world before Adam. The world as we know it today is not the original creation as there was a world

before Adam – as Satan spoilt everything. The world we enjoy today is the world that was created in Genesis 1:2b.
Our restored world is not perfect, as it is tainted by the previously fallen world. God did concern Himself with us, redeeming us from all the curses of the past worlds or whatever the demons may throw at us. The demons are older than Adam as they originate from the previously fallen world. They are from the east or the early beginnings before Adam.
The power of the Amorites is greater than either the powers of the Amalekites, the Palestinians or the Midianites as all of them are inspired by the gods. The gods of the Amorites are to be feared as all the other enemies hide beneath their umbrella. We have an array of enemies such as the Palestinians and many others, but our real enemy is not our flesh and blood (Palestinians') but rather the spirits in heaven or the Amorites. Our fight is against the powers of that dark world, and they entice us spiritually. They are the powers of the air, and continually we need to be on guard. The Amorites are different to the others as they are the powers from above, and if we think we can distance ourselves from them by burning our earthly goods it is wrong. Our main battle is not on earth but rather against the things we cannot see.
We need to be aware of the spirits that continually whisper in our ears, and we don't need to heed them. As the Palestinians had five cities, the Amorites had five kings. They portray the unseen powers controlling our earth. It says: 'I am the Lord your God; do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.' (Jud. 6:10) We live in a world that was spoilt by the Amorites (the previous fallen angels or spirits).
They tainted our world, and we share that world or the land. Adam lived in a hostile world that was previously blemished. When Israel invaded the land of Canaan, the land was riddled by the Amorites. We also live in a similar world but if we obey God, the Amorites will not grieve us. We can war against the Palestinians but not against the Amorites we cannot set eyes on.
Once we trust Christ's High Priestly task for us, then they will not trouble us. When Israel did cry to the Lord because of the Midianites, He did send a prophet to Israel (v. 7). We need to notice that, in the first instance, God did send them an unknown prophet, but the second time God Himself appeared to Gideon. The unknown man or the prophet told them that the Lord Jehovah gave him a message. 'This is what the God of Israel says: I brought you up out of slavery in Egypt and rescued you from the Egyptians and from all those who oppressed you.
I drove out your enemies and gave you their land. The Lord your God told you not to worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you now live. They did not listen to Him.' (6:8–10) That is the sin Israel committed. The following dialogue the people had was not with the prophet but Jehovah Himself. With great detail, the background is pictured. The Lord appeared beneath the oak. In Genesis 18, the majestic oak tree is designated as the tree where Abraham met the two angels, and the angel happened to be God Himself, disguised as travellers.
The oak is mentioned over 60 times in the Bible. Many believe the oak to be sacred, and others associate the tree with witchcraft and other occult

practices. Here the Lord Himself chose to reside beneath the oak as previously with Abraham. There Gideon was called upon to liberate Israel. Firstly we need to acquaint ourselves with the prophet of God who reveals the unfaithfulness of Israel.
The unnamed prophet exposes Israel's real unbelief. Then an angel appeared with a good message. The Angel is the risen Christ with the message of salvation. He says that Gideon will smite the Midianites as one man (6:16). In the Bible we frequently read about the two messengers; the first was Aaron but his son Eleazar or Phinehas portrays the Lord Jesus as the Christ. Aaron portrays the old covenant but Eleazar the risen Christ, the bearer of the new covenant. In the Gospels, the Lord Jesus (Prophet) exposed the people's weaknesses, and that is why the leaders were annoyed, and it deepened their scepticism. In contrast, the Good News is preached by the risen Christ as He is the Lord Jehovah Himself. In the Bible, we frequently find that before the real redeemer arrived an angel appeared to them, and that also happened to Moses, Joshua and Samson. The deliverance is debated by the angel, and he uses the symbolism of the setting, as the 'beating out of wheat' is to illustrate the great redemptive work of Christ. Each detail in this chapter is absorbed to portray His resurrected life. 'Then the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress in order to save it from the Midianites.' (Jud. 6:11)
The oak, winepress and the wheat do convey the truths relevant to our resurrection with Christ, and they are the rudiments of the new covenant. If we miss the one picture we will always trace it in the following as our real salvation is procured as part of the new covenant. It is our life from the dead as both the wheat and the wine is pressed to procure those products, and the oak tree with its acorn epitomises us as circumcised in Christ.
Any food or grain was simply seized by the Midianites, and the Israelites had to go hungry. In the future, the enemies of Israel will be like locusts devouring their harvest (Joel 1) and they left nothing edible on the land. We can choose either life (Christ) or death (Midianites). If any person adheres to the principles of the old covenant, death or the enemies will lurk around the corner.
True life can only emanate from God. Life is endowed to us as in the preparation of a meal. Both the prophet (messenger) and Gideon shared a meal together and there was true communion between the two, or between us and the Lord. Now the only symbolism we are left with is the baptism, the bread and the wine. The wine is the life of the new covenant, and the bread is the grain of seed that did sprout from the ground. It is alive as Christ's work is accomplished via His death and resurrection. They convey simple truths. When Israel does call on the Lord (6:7) then He will deliver them. In the early history from Adam, they only called on the Lord's name when Seth grew up. He had a son and named him Enosh. At that time people first began to worship the Lord by name (Gen. 4:26). He was the third generation from Adam. The Lord says that if any person calls on His name, he will be saved. Salvation is found in no one else, for there

is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). The people did call on the name of the Lord and the Lord's first response was to send a prophet, and he told them who the Lord was. He told them that God rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians and whoever oppresses them now will be freed if they trust in Him. He chased all their enemies from the land of Canaan, and He gave them their rightful land. God clearly told them not to worship the gods like the Amorites, but to remain faithful to Him. The Lord did intervene, and the prophet who visited Gideon did encourage him and told him who the Lord is. The Lord did send someone to prepare His way on earth, as in the next verse (v. 11) the Lord (angel) did appear to Gideon.

It is the proper edict, and we have a similar setting when our Lord appeared at Bethlehem. He said: 'Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me.' (Mal. 3:1) Before the Lord appeared He did send John the Baptist, who is also a type of Christ. John was the humiliated and that is the reason why John was beheaded as he portrays the 'first'. He epitomised the Lord Jesus, who was later crucified to prepare the way for the risen Christ. Throughout our Lord's first coming to earth He was always despised by men. John the Baptist said that Christ must increase, and he must decrease. John preached someone who will appear shortly, and who is from above (Jh. 3:30–31).

Both John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus had the same message and they did baptise the people, but John died to prepare the way of our Lord. John's life experiences on earth portrayed the first principles of the world, and it is fleeting, as the old covenant of the law will end; to inaugurate the new and the eternal things via the resurrected Christ. Even before our Lord was resurrected, John conveyed the truths regarding the first. Once Christ resurrected from the dead, we can familiarise ourselves with the truths regarding the eternal things.

Similarly the coming of our Lord is also phrased in two. With His first coming, He was despised but with His second coming He will be glorified. Often John the Baptist was in trouble, and when he said the wrong thing, he literally lost his head. The old covenant prepares the way for the new covenant and the Lord Jesus had to prepare the way for His second return to earth.

All the miracles our Lord did on earth did not articulate His humiliated life on earth, but rather His glorification after His resurrection. His death ended His humiliation and since His resurrection, He is glorified with the greatest possible name. In the life story of Joseph, we too can trace the way of our Lord's humiliation followed by His glorification. We too need to humble ourselves, for then God will exalt us. Joseph is clearly a picture of Christ who used to be despised in prison, to later rule with Pharaoh. That is the modus operandi of God as He sets aside the first to establish the second (Heb. 10:9). If we do call on the name of the Lord, then He will appear to us. When Christ returns to earth as the Messiah or Jehovah, He will be recognised by the scars in His hands.

Our Lord will appear twice, and there are two facets. The first is as the humiliated or as a prophet as during the time of Gideon, and with His second coming He will appear in glory, as the Jehovah, who later appeared

to Gideon. Another example is David. He was despised and he had to flee for his life.
Once Saul died, he became king over all Israel; he reigned over the two tribes of Israel at Hebron, to later rule all Israel at Jerusalem. We too will experience the humiliation and it will be brief, but it will be rewarded handsomely. The working of our salvation captured the minds of the prophets and they prophesied about that. However, they had many questions but we have the answers.
‘They wondered what the Spirit of God was talking about, when He foretold them about Christ's suffering and the great glory to be revealed. They enquired when and to whom all that will happen.’ (1 Pet. 1:11) They knew that during their lifetime certain truths will never happen, but only during our dispensation. Our message is so wonderful that even the angels were eager to peer into the truths of our time (1 Pet. 1:9–11).
The first is fleeting, and the prophets witnessed them but the second is everlasting. Aaron and his descendants offered year after year and now the real High Priest after the order of Melchizedek did intervene for us. Our offerings or the offerings Aaron made will not suffice when it is compared to the great offering the once rejected Lord made for us. No more offerings are required as everything is dealt with.
The prophet who appeared to the people (6:8) projects the Lord Jesus in His humiliation or as John the Baptist, but the angel who later appeared (v. 11) is none other than Jehovah to picture the truths of the resurrected Christ. It was the Lord Jehovah who spoke to Gideon. Before the angel appeared to Gideon, an unknown prophet appeared, and he is nameless. He appeared for a short time, and he preached the old or the old covenant of the law. He had nothing new to tell them.
Often the Lord Jesus addressed the religious leaders of His time saying: ‘Is it not what Moses wrote about?’ Later an angel did appear to Gideon and today it will be known as theophany: it is the visible appearance of God in the Old Testament times, often, but not always, in human form. I believe whenever someone was visited by an ‘angel of the Lord’, it could, in fact, be the pre-incarnate Christ. That is called Christophany or His pre-incarnation. He appeared on earth before He became flesh on earth. The Lord Jesus took upon Himself flesh and became like one of us, and it could also have happened during the time of Abraham.
A stranger once walked towards Abraham, and he must have thought the visitor looked lost. He later discovered it was the Lord Himself, and he named him as such. The saying ‘the angel of the Lord’ can in the Hebrew language be written as ‘the angel namely the Lord’. We have the freedom to decide whether to choose for either the word ‘of’ or ‘namely’. To me it will be clearer if we stick to the word namely. The angel can be either Jehovah or Christ and to its senseless to distinguish them. Even when Joshua was in a battle, he unknowingly approached an angel of the Lord. Politely he asked the 'stranger' if he was fighting for him or his enemy. The stranger told him he was the Lord Himself (Jos. 5:13–14). Even to Samson’s mother the angel appeared twice (Judg. 13:3–21). The trick in knowing whether it is God or not is to prepare a meal. When they did prepare a meal, a fire will ignite it coming from the rock to consume the

meal. The meal was not consumed by the angel, but rather it went up into flames. That was common for the people in the Old Testament. Gideon said if I did find favour in your eyes, please give me a sign to know that it is really God who is speaking to me (6:17).
Gideon prepared a meal, and that was readily accepted when the angel of the Lord touched the meat and bread with the staff in his hand. A fire ignited from the rock, and it consumed everything (Judg. 6:21). That sign convinced Gideon. The Lord must have waited a long time for Gideon to prepare the meal. I believe the angel did look like one of us, and it does not necessarily say that he could consume or enjoy a meal on earth like us. The Lord did not need the meal, but He accepted it – not as we do, who enjoy having it, but as it was burned as an offering to God. If God accepted that, then He would consume it to ignite it with fire. Later, with His birth at Bethlehem, He became like one of us in every aspect. After His resurrection, I doubt whether He ate or drank like us. The Lord did appear as an angel, and an angel is a messenger and nothing more. Any human could be a messenger or an angel.
An angel is a spiritual being, and the wings are mere symbolism. The Lord is His own messenger, and when the Word became flesh (John 1:1), it implies that He became the messenger of God. The Book of Malachi 3:1 says, "I will send my angel before you. " We may be puzzled by this verse, but the angel is none other than the Lord Jesus. "I will send my Son or my messenger who is the Word of God. " John the Baptist is a type of the Lord Jesus, and John may have been either Elijah or Moses – who were mere human beings. In the Book of Malachi, the angel is called the messenger of God. The Lord is the Messenger and Angel, but John the Baptist paved the way for Him.
John the Baptist is a type of the Lord Jesus on earth, and the Lord Jesus is a type of the resurrected Christ. Then came the angel, the Lord, and He sat down. "Sitting down" is an attribute of the Lord. The saying "He sat down" is also mentioned in the Book of Hebrews 10:12: "But that Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God. " He sat on the throne beneath the oak, which portrays the death and resurrection. The acorn portrays the circumcision, as the seed or the nut is partly exposed. With any circumcision, the prepuce is partially excised, leaving a small remnant.
The living Christ is seated at His right hand, and there He is our High Priest. God gave Abraham an oath, and that was the circumcision. The oak reminds us of Abraham, and today many nations regard the oak as a holy tree – a tradition that is not forgotten. The erect stone at any cemetery portrays the resurrection, and we tend to forget it. By levelling the stone to the ground, we defy the resurrection. Jacob believed in the resurrection, and he erected the stone he had slept on.
Both the deeper senses of the stone and the oak are forgotten. When Israel entered the land of Canaan, they built a monument of stones at Gilgal, and the oak too has great typological significance. The oak reminds us of the oath God made with Abraham. One of the many words for oak is "elah" (Str. no. 424), meaning an oath – "alah" (Str. no. 423) – or god ("elah", Str. no. 426). An oath always implies the Word of God, and the

sign of the oak or the acorn is the circumcision, as the "old" is done away with, but a remnant still remains. It is like the capsule of the acorn that partially wraps the nut. Our circumcision is accomplished by Christ, and we do not need a surgeon. "In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ" (Col. 2:11). God's oath will be consummated in those who faithfully trust Him. The circumcision is a mere spiritual practice, as it epitomises the cutting away of our old sinful nature. We are the circumcised as we do not trust in the flesh; our hope is embedded in the new (Eph. 2:11). The oak portrays the resurrection as the old is done away with, and despite being burdened by the old or the "capsule of the oak", we do communicate the "new nature" within us. Abraham settled beneath the oak, and similarly the Lord did when He met Gideon.

In the Book of Hebrews, it says that the Lord is seated, and later it mentions the oath. When people take an oath, they call on someone greater than themselves to adhere to it. Without a doubt, an oath is binding. Whenever we confirm an oath, we raise two fingers, as it is a double oath. It epitomises the two oaths of Abraham, as one is to his "Seed" or Christ, and the other is to his natural descendants. Not the old, but the new – or the second – will inherit the new covenant.

The oak was at Ophrah, and Ophrah means a place of fruitfulness, as Pharaoh did when he dreamt of the fertile cattle. Bethlehem is placed in the fields of Ophrah.

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah (Ophrah), though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2). It is a fruitful place, and even Ruth mentioned the place when they harvested the fruit. She mentioned Ephrathah (Bethlehem) three times, and that is where she married Boaz, who was the great-grandfather of King David. We may ask who was born at Ophrah. The last son of Jacob, namely Benjamin, was also born there, and so was Jesus of Bethlehem.

In Luke 2, the angel did appear to the shepherds in the countryside of Bethlehem, and to them were assured the good tidings of great joy. There the Messiah would be born, or the son of the last days. Benjamin is the son of the last days, or in Hebrew "the son of My right hand". Rachel, who died, named him Ben-oni or "a son of my sorrows". Rachel died there, and in Hebrew her name can be translated as a female lamb or ewe. She died known to be a shepherd, as Christ, who is the good Shepherd.

That oak stood at the place of Manasseh, and it belonged to Joash the Abiezrite.

Joash means "given by the Lord", and what did we receive from God? "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given" (Isa. 9:6).

Abiezrite means "my father is help". The father is God, and He gave His Son to us. The name also implies the stone who is our help – and that stone is Christ.

Gideon had been threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites. The area was secluded, as he wanted to hide the fruit from the Midianites. The idea of threshing the wheat is to get rid

of the flakes, and that epitomises rebirth. The old is taken away to reveal the new or the grain. The winepress denotes a similar meaning, as the wine portrays the new covenant. If we fail to spot the meaning of the one, we will stumble on the other. They all portray our rebirth in Christ, as He will deliver us from the old.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, He said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior" (Judg. 6:12). In Hebrew, the word Gideon means to cut down or to hew down. He literally did that when he chopped down the tree.

John the Baptist once said a certain tree needed to be cut down:

"And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matt. 3:10).

We may ask which tree it could be. It is a tree in Daniel 4 that epitomises the kingdoms of the world.

Similarly, the small mustard seed that matured into a huge tree towered over the other trees (Matt. 13:31). By nature, it should have been a shrub. Babylon is the tree, and it could be the tree of good and evil. That tree will be chopped down, and here the haughty nations are compared to a towering tree that will be chopped down. Gideon would put an axe to them. They depict the fruitfulness of the old covenant. They desire a great harvest and many children. Gideon was brave enough to chop it down, and subsequently he had many problems, even with his own family. He cut down the sacred trees and poles adjacent to the altar of the gods of the Midianites (Judg. 6:26).

The Lord appeared to him, and He hailed him as a warrior. Gideon did not see himself as a warrior, as he hid himself in the winepress, doing things in secret. Gideon was shy and frightened of the Midianites, as was Nicodemus, who visited the Lord at night (John 3). It is different, as the Lord saw him in a different way. Gideon does make us think of Jephthah, as he knew the Scriptures, and he always had the correct answer at hand (Judg. 11). Gideon wisely replied to the Lord: why had all the wrong happened to us? And where were all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, "The Lord brought us up out of Egypt"?

But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites. He was familiar with the previous miracles God had done in Egypt, and now they seemed to have ceased. That concerned him, but he was well acquainted with the Scriptures. He knew why the Lord had left them and why He had allowed the Midianites to rule over them. Gideon had a humble spirit and knew the truth, and that humble spirit branded him until he died. If we approach the Lord in a similar manner, a door will open for us.

If Gideon had to argue his cause, thinking being an Israelite was enough to make him immune to God's judgments, then God's door would be shut. Being proud will not help us, as only our faith will pave the way. Gideon had many attributes, but if it proved he had no faith, then all of them would have been senseless. He realised God had forsaken them.

If we remain humble, we will be ready to accept the simple Gospel.

The Lord answered him:

"Go with the strength you have and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!"
We may query what strength God is talking about. It is only the power of God, or else the power Gideon knew the Lord would endow him with. Gideon knew the power was totally dependent on God's working, and that awareness caused the many miracles. If we are inclined to think we have the power to redeem ourselves, it will hamper us.
The well-known song "He's got the whole world in His hands" is off beam, as the world is now directed by Satan. They hope that God rules the world, and that is not true. The Midianites or Satan rule our world, as in the days of Gideon, and we are limited by the old creation. We are promised great freedom, but we are yet subjected to the world of slavery to sin.
With our Lord's crucifixion, He turned His cheek away from the world, and that is still happening today. There is no communication between Him and the world until He returns to earth. Redemption and forgiveness are only for the confessed sinner who can sense the world's despair. That truth will free them, as written in the Gospel. The religious leaders enquired of Him why the need to be freed. He replied:
"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).
The Jews argued incorrectly that they were the children of Abraham, and they had never worshipped any other God. "We are no slaves – why do 'You' tell us to be freed?" The Lord told them to be freed from their sin, and that is not achieved by Moses but via the Son. If we do not understand that, then we are enslaved to sin, and we will never find the truth. If we deem ourselves as righteous, we end up thinking we need no help, ending a life without a Saviour. Once we realise God has cursed our world and we are enslaved to the law or the Midianites, then we are apt to believe the true message of the Gospel.
"But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel?"
Gideon immediately became an apostle, and Paul asked the same. He asked, "What shall I do?" He would lead the real people of God, and Gideon is a type of Paul and the Lord Jesus; he grasped the magnitude of his mission.
Both our Lord and the Apostle Paul were dependent on the Word of God. Similarly, Gideon also portrays the Lord Jesus from Nazareth, and He had to learn obedience.
"Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8). Our Lord had to trust the Word of God, and then God highly exalted Him. If we accept our bleak position, then we will grasp the truth.
It seemed as though Gideon said with a sigh that even though he was the least of his clan and part of the weakest tribe of Israel, namely Manasseh, how could he possibly redeem Israel? As with David, he was the least in his family, and similarly we need to acknowledge we are nothing. The world will not regard that as a good positive attribute, but when we are poor, we will become strong in Christ. The crux is that the Lord would be with Gideon, and He would cause the victory.

The Lord said He would be with him, and he would be the "One man" (Christ) to cause the redemption. The Lord promised to be with us too, and that is possible once we humble ourselves. Even Paul had a problem with the thorn in his flesh, and he prayed three times – and that was enough. He accepted his weaknesses, as he knew God would strengthen him. Our achievements will not cause the victory, and Gideon appreciated that; he totally depended on God's grace. That is our solitude.
Paul knew that God had sent him, and similarly Gideon wanted to know; and rightfully he asked for a sign from God. He said that if God was truly going to help him, to prove via a sign that He was truly God and that He did speak to him. He told the angel to remain beneath the oak until he returned to bring Him an offering. The Lord agreed to remain waiting until he returned. Gideon hurried home, and he cooked a young goat and, with half a bushel of flour, baked a loaf of bread without yeast. That unleavened bread will remind us of the Passover. With the Passover, Israel prepared a young goat or lamb. After the Passover was the feast of unleavened bread. The feast conveys the truths regarding Christ's redemptive work for us and how it was procured with His first coming to earth. There were three annual feasts in Israel, and they were the:

- Feast of Unleavened Bread (first);
- Feast of Weeks (second);
- Feast of Tabernacles (third) (2 Chron. 8:13).

The first group of feasts portrays the truths concerning Christ's first coming to earth; the second group of feasts conveys the truths concerning the Church; and the third group of feasts conveys the truths concerning Christ's second coming to earth.
The truths concerning the first and the third groups of festivals are simple, but the second group of festivals, caught between them, is not that simple.

- During the Feast of the Passover, there had to be a Sunday, and on that day was the sheaf of the Firstfruits. On that day, the first fruits from the field were quickly harvested from the land, even before they were fully ripened. The "new fruit" symbolises Christ, as He initiated the new creation when He became the Firstborn of a total new creation after His resurrection; and then a lamb had to be slain (Lev. 23:11–12). In the New Testament, we read that Christ is our Passover, and He is sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7). To those who are sceptical regarding any typological truths in the Bible, they need to believe that Christ is our Passover. The unleavened bread symbolises the reborn man who is cleansed from the yeast. Yeast pictures decay and sin, and if we share in the blood (cup of wine) and the flesh (bread) of the Lord Jesus, then we do enjoy a meal with our resurrected Christ. The Passover is slain, and we are left with only the bread and the wine. We can enjoy a feast together, and we have no need to be "without hope", as the world has a bleak future. For seven days we can enjoy the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and for us that is everlasting.

- The second group of feasts portrays Christ's work within our bodies. It is the working of God's Spirit within us, and the world cannot discern Him. God speaks to us, but the world is not aware of Him.
- The third group of feasts, or the Feast of Tabernacles, portrays Christ's second coming to earth. It commenced on the first Tishri with the blowing of the trumpets, symbolising our rapture. The 10th Tishri is the great Day of Atonement, and then Israel will receive Christ. The Feast of Tabernacles includes the Feast of Booths, when Israel had to live in tents. That feast mainly pictures the other nations of the world who will receive Christ. The above feasts commence with the Passover, when the Passover is consumed hurriedly.

Gideon made the offering with an ephah of flour or a measuring container. In the Book of Zechariah, an ephah portrays Israel that is caught in the law. It says a heavy lead cover was lifted off the basket (ephah), and there was a woman sitting inside it (Zech. 5:7). The woman is Israel, and she is caught and trapped in a basket with a lead cover. The weight of the lead is the law, and it restricted the nation of Israel.

The basket is woven from reeds or any kind of branches. He carried the meat in a basket, and the broth or the soup was in a pot. The basket needs to remind us of Moses, as his mother hid him amongst the reeds in a little basket made of papyrus reeds.

In Hebrew, the word "basket woven from reeds" means to lift up or to exalt. Moses conquered the waters of the Nile, and as Moses was lifted above the waters, similarly Noah drifted on the flood waters, and here Gideon hoisted the basket to God.

The broth is the soup, and he boiled the young goat inside the pot. The meat caught in a boiling pot of water or the soup was lifted from the water or the Word of God. It is exalted. "Soup" in Hebrew means "maraq", meaning to be scrubbed or polished. The goat in the water is prepared for the offering. Water is the Word of God, and we are equipped by the living water. Similarly, David took the stones from the water (soup), and they were polished, as the stones were smoothly rounded by the running water. The water is the Word of God, and we are cleansed by the running and cleansing water. Similarly, the goat is cleansed, and it is presented to God. Likewise, our Lord on earth was in the pot or soup, and He was cleansed by the living Word of God. Our Lord continually referred to the Word (water), even though He lived on earth. His mind was fixed on the Word, and for that reason God highly exalted Him, to raise Him from the basket or the pot.

People going in an air balloon are placed in a basket. The water within the basket will seep through, as the meat is symbolically offered to God.

Gideon presented his offering to Jehovah, who was seated beneath the oak tree. I am sure He sat on a stone beneath the oak. Gideon placed the meat and the unleavened bread on a rock, and he poured the soup upon them. The Angel touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of His staff. A fire flared from the rock, consuming the offering.

The rock is the resurrected Christ, and I am sure it was the rock He sat on. The soup, the meat, and the unleavened cakes that were poured on the

rock do have something in common. They all portray the Lord. When the Angel touched the meat and bread with the staff in His hand, He must have mixed them, and a fire appeared, consuming everything.
Each offering in the Bible is presented on a stone. The altar at the tabernacle had many stones inside it. An ideal offering will be placed on a large stone or even a mountain.
The end of the staff is similar to the acorn, and that depicts the resurrection and our circumcision in Christ. The end of the staff is mentioned many times in the Bible. Jacob did lean on the end of his staff when he blessed his family. He did not lean on the end of his bed! The end of his staff portrays the promises of Christ's resurrected life and our rebirth. He delegated the promises and thus leant heavily upon it. He understood the import of the first and the second, as the first had to give way for the second. He crossed his hands. Psalm 23:4 says if David had to enter the gloom of death, he would not be afraid, for God is always with him. His rod and his staff would protect and comfort him.
The meal is prepared in the midst of the enemy, and the fire consuming the offering is the Spirit of God. It portrays what will happen to the Midianites. In the same Psalm, we also have a prepared meal: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies" (Ps. 23:5).
On the day when Christ resurrected from the dead, He gave the unleavened bread to the two people who joined Him on the way to Emmaus. Strangely, when they took the bread from Him (as part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread), they recognised Him, and immediately He disappeared. Similarly, here the Angel disappeared once the fire consumed the offering. Once we understand He is Jehovah or God, we do not need Him, as His Word will direct us. That is the hallmark of our dispensation. We are convinced He ascended from the Mount of Olives, even if we never set our eyes upon Him. We know Him via His Word, and for us that is sufficient.
"And though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1:8).
When Gideon realised that He was the Lord, he cried out,"
Sovereign Lord, I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!"
The Lord reassured him not to be frightened, as he would not die. Gideon knew that seeing the Lord may be fatal, but he was assured.
Then Gideon built an altar to the Lord, and he named it "The Lord is Peace". The altar remained at Ophrah for many years, and that is nothing more than a high mound of stones. Today, the Church is the altar of God.
That night, the Lord also told Gideon to take the second bull from his father's herd that was seven years old. The bull may have been one from a pair of his father's oxen to pull a cart. Even amongst the animals, there is continual rivalry; amongst themselves, they decide who will be the submissive one and who will lead them. We have similar behaviour amongst dogs or horses. Similarly, our Lord will choose the second or the submissive one and not the first or the principal one. The one to cause the turnaround of events is the "second", and he will fight their cause. The first is fleeting, but the second epitomises the new creation. We find this

equation time and again in the Bible, and especially in the Book of Genesis.
The second ox portrays the rebirth. The ox was seven years old, as the Midianites who ruled Israel for seven years. Once we are beyond the seven, we reach the eighth or the new creation. Symbolically, with that sacrifice, we are ushered into the new creation. Presently, we live in a spoiled and doomed world and await the new world. The first world was spoiled by Satan, and in our recreated world we suffer the costs, but we are patient and await the new. Our world is branded by both the number 2 and 7, but the 3 and the 8 portray the new covenant. Adam lived on a recreated earth, and from that earth our salvation will be procured.
Gideon had to tear down the altar of Baal that belonged to his father, and he had to cut down the Asherah pole, which is a sacred tree. Once Baal's altar is replaced by the altar of the Lord, then the Lord will redeem Israel. Gideon broke down the sacred trees or the poles that adjoined the altar of Baal. The adorned pole was sacred to the worshippers of Baal, and that was in opposition to the staff or sceptre of the Lord. "
The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of rulers" (Isa. 14:5).
Only the Lord's sceptre will rule the people. Gideon prepared an altar to the Lord on the height or top of the rock. At a similar rock, Solomon built a temple to the Lord. It was Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared to his father David, who bought the place from Araunah the Jebusite (2 Chron. 3:1). An angel instructed David to build an altar there, and for the place he gave Araunah 600 shekels of gold (1 Chron. 21:15–28). Every mountain top is perceived as part of heaven and a stronghold.
"The Lord has become my fortress, and my God the rock in whom I take refuge" (Ps. 94:22).
At that place, an altar is placed, and likewise there is another rock at Carmel, where Elijah challenged the worshippers of Baal (1 Kings 18). From the Mount of Olives, our Lord ascended into heaven. With His return, He will descend to the same Mount.
The altar of Baal had to be exchanged for an altar of the Lord, and the wood of the grove and also the pole was used to ignite a fire. The fruitfulness of our creation – e. g., the pole or the grove – will not be endowed to Baal or Satan but rather it will be returned to the Lord.
Many today think there is a vast difference between worshipping idols and God. There is not a great difference, as many today believe the Star of David is pagan. They attribute the number 666, the snake, the fish symbol, the cross, and many more to Satan, but each of them signifies Christ. He is the "snake or the serpent" that was lifted in the wilderness, and Satan abused those symbols. If we fail to notice Christ in all the Scriptures, we are susceptible to the teachings of Satan. To ignore the symbols or render them to Satan is wrong. The import of the symbolism is fulfilled in Christ. He will unite us with God, and figuratively He is the number 6 or the hook that will unite both heavens with the earth. We need to return the symbols to the rightful Owner. The elevated serpent portrays the risen snake or Christ, but later in the history of Israel that serpent was used for pagan worship.

Gideon axed the altar and the grove of Baal, and he had ten men. Ten epitomises our faith in the Word of God. God spoke to us, and we need to return to Him in faith. So, Gideon took ten of his servants, and he did as the Lord commanded him. Gideon did everything at night, not because he was afraid of the other members of his father's household and the people of the town. The night symbolises the world and the hearts of sinful men that are darkened by the wrath of God (Rom. 1:21).

Early the next morning, the people of the town were agitated when they discovered that the altar of Baal had been knocked down and that the grove beside it had disappeared. In its place, a new altar was built, sacrificing to the true God. The people questioned who had done that, and after asking around they learned that it was Gideon, the son of Joash. "Bring out your son," they shouted to Joash. "He must die for destroying the altar of Baal and for cutting down the pole of Baal. "

Joash replied and questioned the mob, as the altar was upon his land. He told them: why do you defend Baal? Will you argue his case? Whoever pleads his case will that morning be put to death! If Baal truly is a god, let him defend himself and destroy the one who axed down his altar! In short, if Baal is God, let him look after himself.

Later, we have a similar history at Mount Carmel when God and Baal contested with each other. The people repeatedly prayed to Baal to consume his offering, but Elijah mocked them, and he caused a fire to descend from heaven. God consumed His offering or meal, and He proved who was truly God. Baal will never defend his cause. Now, many people worship different gods, and in return they will do nothing for them. We may ask why they worship them. The demons may talk, but their words carry no weight. They are inept and cannot procreate anything. If Baal cannot defend himself, why do the people plead his case?

Once the high priest said: "We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God" (Acts 23:9). We cannot constrain His work.

From then on, Gideon was called Jerubbaal, meaning "let Baal defend himself". The wrath of Baal rested on him, and nothing happened.

Soon afterward, the armies of Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east formed an alliance against Israel and crossed the Jordan, camping in the valley of Jezreel. The vale of Jezreel is the worst possible venue, as from that place the Lord will judge the people.

Jezreel means "God will sow" or "God will scatter", as the scattering of seed by a sower. In the first few verses of the Book of Hosea, God mentions the judgement that will overwhelm Jezreel.

The name also has a positive connotation, as Israel who will be scattered all over the world will later be assembled as the remnant from amongst all the nations of the world. At Jezreel, the Lord will scatter the enemies, and the Midianites and the Amalekites will run with a great noise.

Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.

We need to note that previously He was called the "Angel", namely the Lord, but now He is the Spirit. After verse 21, the Angel departed from Gideon, but God spoke to him via the Spirit. The Spirit is the unseen Lord. That is true today and also true during the days of the Book of Acts. The

Lord strengthened Gideon, and he blew the trumpet. The blowing (air) of the trumpet is the spirit of Gideon, and that is likened to the Spirit of God. He did that via the power of God; when he blew inside the trumpet, it is likened to God breathing life into Adam.

The voice of the trumpet is the voice of God, and presently He does not speak to the world, but at an appropriate time He will speak. He will bellow with the sound of the trumpet, gathering us with the rapture (1 Thess. 4:16). The voice of the trumpet is the voice of the horn – of the Ram that was slain for us. Then He will be heard, and He will engross Himself with our world. The Ram is alive today, and His Spirit will echo. The trumpet will also blow once Israel repents and also after 33 years, at the end of the great tribulation. Yes, it will blow once more at the battle of Armageddon. Then the believing remnant will enter the Millennium.

The horn portrays the kingship, as the ten horns or the ten kings in the Book of Revelation. With the same horn, David was anointed king, portraying the power of the resurrected.

Gideon blew the horn, and his family united with him. Abiezer means "my father is help". They would follow Gideon, and he sent messengers to the tribe of Manasseh, as he was from them (Judg. 6:15). The tribes that lived close to Manasseh, such as Zebulun and Naphtali, joined him. Manasseh was the oldest son of Joseph, and he had to stand down to allow Ephraim, the second son of Joseph, to be the firstborn. Esau is an example, as he was set aside to allow Jacob to have the firstborn right. Ishmael, Esau, and also Manasseh were the first to be born, and they express the old covenant. They had to "make way" for the new, who is Joseph and Ephraim.

Later in history, we will find that the real salvation did not come via Manasseh but via Ephraim, who proved to be the real firstborn (Judg. 7:24–25). Ephraim is the son of Joseph, and early in the New Testament we read of an angel or the Lord who spoke to another Joseph – and who could he be? Is this Joseph from Egypt or Bethlehem? The Lord Jehovah appeared to Joseph in Matthew 1, and by the mere mentioning of his name, it prompts us to think of Ephraim.

Throughout the Old Testament, the leaders thought they secured the victory, but they never attained it. David, Joshua, and even Gideon failed to usher them into the rest, and none of them did, but only the true Joseph or Christ will accomplish it (Heb. 4). Ephraim is the real "Phar" or fruit that will secure that rest.

Gideon sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, summoning their warriors, and all of them responded (Judg. 6:35). Many were called to war, but later it seemed that only 300 men were enough. Besides Manasseh, three more tribes were called – why them?

Manasseh was the oldest son of Joseph, and his younger brother Ephraim became the firstborn. Ephraim means to bear fruit. In Hebrew, the name Manasseh means "to allow us to forget". Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said,

"It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household" (Gen. 41:51).

All the hardships and the sorrows that were caused by Joseph's brothers are forgotten. Similarly, the trouble that was caused by the Midianites will be forgotten, as the Lord will deal with them. The beliefs Manasseh treasured and whatever he forfeited will be procured by his younger brother Ephraim.
Asher is the eighth son of Joseph, and being the eighth portrays the new covenant or a new beginning. His name means "happiness", and it has to do with Christ's return to earth. Indirectly, Asher is also implicated with the birth of our Lord Jesus – Anna waited patiently for the Lord at the temple, and she was from the tribe of Asher. Officially, Anna represented the ten tribes, and she physically saw the Lord Jesus at the temple when He was 40 days old. "
She gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking ahead to the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38).
Asher is also the second son of Zilpah. The second will inherit the firstborn right.
Both Zebulun and Naphtali are usually named together, as in Isaiah and in the Book of Matthew.
"Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on for ever. The land belonging to both Zebulun and Naphtali will soon be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light – a light that will shine on all who live in the land where death casts its shadow" (Isa. 9:1–2).
In the New Testament, it says when our Lord left Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the shadows of death, on them a great light has dawned" (Matt. 4:13–16).
The Lord lived there, and the darkness and the gloom that used to oppress it were lifted by the "Bringer of good tidings" (Isa. 8:22–9:1). Our Lord lived at Capernaum and on the fringes of those two tribes. The two tribes had a special blessing. In Hebrew, the word Zebulun suggests a "dwelling place". It says when Zebulun was born:"Now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons. " So, she called his name Zebulun (Gen. 30:20).
The name Zebulun means "my husband will dwell with me". There will be true communication with them and God, who will be their Husband. He was the sixth son of Leah, and via the six we enter the sixth dispensation, the time of the tribulation when Jehovah will involve Himself with the plights of Israel. Zebulun conveys the new covenant, and together they will share the same house. The name Naphtali means to wrestle:
"Then Rachel said, 'With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed. ' So, she called his name Naphtali" (Gen. 30:8).

They wrestled, but that struggle will end in victory. Once the battle is forgotten, the Millennium will commence. When the real Gideon or the Wrestler appears, then the battle will be won, and Jehovah will dwell with them.

Many of the Old Testament believers were acquainted with the meaning of certain typological pictures. After Gideon met Jehovah, we may query why the sudden emphasis on the woollen fleece and water?

Gideon spoke to God, and he asked for two more signs; the first is easier than the second. If God was truly going to rescue Israel as He promised in the past, He needed to prove this to Gideon. That night, he would put some wool on the threshing floor. If in the morning the fleece was wet with dew, but the ground was dry, then he would know that God was going to help him rescue Israel. That happened. When Gideon got up the next morning, he squeezed the fleece, and he wrung out a whole bowlful of water.

Then Gideon said to God: "Please don't be angry with me but let me make one more request. This time let the fleece remain dry while the ground around it is wet with dew. " The following night, God did as Gideon asked. The fleece was dry in the morning, but the ground was covered with dew.

In the first sign of Gideon, the fleece was most likely the wool from the sheep, and the floor is the threshing floor (goren), and that is no ordinary floor. At the threshing floor, the grain is threshed. The floor epitomises the judgement, as the grain is separated from the chaff, portraying the old man (chaff) that is removed from the new (grain). The real altar of King Solomon's temple used to be on Mount Moriah, and strangely that used to be a threshing floor! (2 Chron. 3:1)

The floor does not only portray our death but also our resurrection, as with every offering that ascended to God in heaven. It is a sweet-smelling fragrance. The offering ended on the altar, but its fragrance ascended to the Lord in heaven. Ruth (ch. 3) met Boaz on the threshing floor, and there she had a son. She did not only get the promised grain, but much more!

Gideon did put some wool on the threshing floor. If in the morning the fleece was wet, but the surrounding ground was dry, then he would know that God was going to help him rescue Israel as He promised. The sheep or the flock conveys Israel, and the fleece as well. Typologically, all Israel will be reborn before they enter the Millennium. All the sons of Jacob will call on the Name of Jehovah, and then all Israel will rightfully belong to Him. The hair (fleece), as with the hair of Samson, conveys the physical, natural Israel that will be blessed, and that is portrayed when he wrung the water from the fleece. The hair conveys the power of the old creation.

Esau was also hairy; as in Hebrew, his name means "hairy". When Jacob wanted to disguise himself as Esau, he had a woollen fleece of a goat on his hands and neck (Gen. 27:16). The Bible mentions the power of Esau. It was his strength, and he had much energy to spare. The hair does not portray the spiritual (Jacob) but rather the physical. Esau's name in Hebrew means "hairy", and the reason is he was very hairy when he was born (Gen. 25:25). He is also called "Edom", which means "red".

From birth, Samson had long hair, and that is the power that emanated from him – the power of the natural man and not from God. From birth, he

had that great potential. The greatest victory Samson enjoyed was after his hair was shaven. That was not the power of the natural man, but the power God endowed him with. It is different.
The priests were never allowed to dress themselves in wool, which portrays the natural, but instead they were clothed in linen to picture their rebirth. Our Lord Jesus went as a sheep to the shearers, and He opened not His mouth. He remained dumb while they sheared Him, as the shearing of hair portrays death. Being either sheared or slaughtered is the same. The shearing of a sheep is like slaying them. The natural power is taken from Christ when He was crucified. He abandoned everything to be exalted via His rebirth, and He exchanged the old for the new.
If the fleece is wet, it is blessed by the Word of God. Natural Israel will be blessed once they accept Him in faith. Israel will not exist to be only condemned by God, but they too will be blessed. It does not imply the spiritual Israel or the Church. The woollen fleece is the land Israel, and similar to Esau they will also obtain a blessing. Jacob was blessed as the firstborn, but Esau is also blessed. When Jacob received the blessing, he felt and smelled like Esau. When the Church is blessed, they also smell and sense to be like Israel. Esau, as the hairy one, will also be blessed, as he epitomises natural Israel. The Church replaced Israel, and they are richly blessed with the greatest of blessings Israel could receive, as Jacob who was disguised. The Gentiles (Church) became co-heirs in Christ. There is a similar setting between Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was also blessed, and the first record ever of an angel appearing to us on earth was strangely to Hagar when she was driven out. She with Ishmael epitomises natural Israel that is freed and blessed. Truly, natural Israel is blessed, as the fleece soaked by the dew.
The dew is mentioned more than once. It says:
"O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew that goes away" (Hos. 6:4).
Dew is water from heaven, and it precipitates unnoticeably; in the morning, we have no idea where the water comes from, as there are no clouds in the sky. The water is the Word of God that descends unnoticeably from heaven. How it happens is a mystery. It does not rain, but the fleece is wet. The surrounding earth will be dry. Gideon wrung the fleece as it was soaked by water; it is blessed by the Word of God that is entrusted to them. The Word is solely given to Israel, meaning that each Gentile who believes in Christ is reckoned as an Israelite.
"For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" (Rom. 9:6). In the Old Testament, we have many examples of Gentile people who were reckoned as belonging to Israel.
Amongst the reckoned heathen are Caleb, meaning "a dog"; Rahab the harlot; and Ruth the Moabite.
Then Gideon said to God: "Please don't be angry with me, but with the following request let the fleece remain dry while the ground around it is wet with dew. " He wanted another sign, but that time the other way round. The blessings were firstly endowed to Israel, as during the time of

Gideon. The same blessing Israel received will be entrusted to the entire world – but not Israel. That is true today, as said by Paul:
"Therefore, I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!" (Acts 28:28).
The heathen will listen and be obedient, but not everyone. The blessings were taken away from the Jewish nation and given to the heathen nations. What were the blessings, and what was given to Israel?
It is His Word and the promises He made. As the Word was endowed to Israel, now the same Word is entrusted to the Gentile nations. That may sound absurd, but it was prophesied previously: "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, 'Here am I, here am I'" (Isa. 65:1).
That truth inspired Paul to write in the Book of Romans:
"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counsellor?" (Rom. 11:33–34).
Now God speaks via the Church or the heathen nations and not Israel. God freed Israel, and if they belong to the Church they will be reckoned as part of the heathen nations. If any boast, thinking they are the natural seed of Israel, it will not suffice, as we need to lay aside everything to claim the simple truths of the Gospel.
We may ask if Israel did stumble with no prospects in sight. Of course not! God's purpose now is to make His salvation accessible to all the Gentiles. They cause the Jews to be jealous, and therefore they may desire it for themselves (Rom. 11:11). That is the logic, as God is no respecter of persons. Now He speaks via the Church, and they are both the Jews and the Gentiles. For any Jew to belong to the Church, they need to become like a Gentile and realise that the only decisive factor is God's saving grace, and not our heritage.
When the whole earth is wet, Israel will be dry, and in itself it is a miracle. That is a real turnabout of events. We have the Word, and we are the true sons of Abraham. We gained the most sought-after blessing in God's plan of salvation. He gave to Israel the old covenant, and now the new covenant is firstly endowed to the heathen nations. We share in the blessings of Abraham and are blessed by the dew. In future, after the rapture, things will change, and then the natural tribes of Israel will be blessed for a second time.

Judges 7

Gideon and his army woke early in the morning, and they went as far as the spring at Harod.
However, the armies of the Midianites camped north of them, in the valley near the hills of Moreh.
Gideon, who woke up early in the morning, portrays our dispensation, as ours commenced with our Lord's resurrection. The Church is the real firstborn or the first to share in His resurrected life. The new covenant

dawned for us, and we, as Gideon, live in a constant battle with Satan. He wishes to harm us, but we, as Gideon, are beside the spring waters at Harod, portraying God's Word within us. Whenever we read in the Bible "early in the morning", our thoughts need to be directed to our fifth dispensation of grace. We are awake and can discern the working of God in our dispensation, while the world is oblivious and sleeping. When our Lord resurrected early in the morning, each member of His body was united with Him; as for us, it's still early, even if Christ rose 2000 years ago.

Gideon is named Jerubbaal – meaning "let Baal contend for himself". Now there is a similar cold war between Satan and us today. Satan is fatally wounded, and his head is fatally wounded and bruised; and remember, he is still at war with us. At best, his efforts will not prevail, and even a multitude of nations will not intimidate us.

In Hebrew, Harod, where the spring was, implies "to be frightened", and we are not sure who was terrified, as there were anxious confrontations between the two.

The enemy was situated in the north, and that is the place of the crown. The Midianites were at the wrong place, as it was the rightful place of Israel, being the leading nation of the world.

"You (Satan) said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God,
I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north'" (Isa. 14:13).

The north is the place of God and not Satan. In contrast, the Southern Cross is the most familiar constellation in the Southern Hemisphere, with four bright stars forming the tips of a cross, as it portrays our Lord's crucifixion. Israel's rightful place is the north, and the Midianites in the south.

Moreh means "early rains" or the noise of the running water. Abraham was at Moreh at the oak tree at Shechem, where he camped when he first entered the land of Canaan. The "early rains" and Gideon waking early in the morning clearly depict our time.

The Lord told Gideon he had too many warriors, and if he allowed the many warriors, then Israel would boast, thinking they saved themselves, and it was not God's doing. Keep in mind that physically Gideon was not strong, unlike King Saul, who was a clear favourite of his time. Gideon had no virtues to make the people think that he could sway battles. Similarly, Abraham, after he defeated his enemies, refused the spoil of his battle to make the people think that the enemies made him rich.

God made Abraham rich, and not the surrounding nations he conquered. Today, the multitudes of people are swayed by their reasoning. If we trust the Bible, we will sense that we are in the minority, and the world will never appreciate the finer truths we treasure. The multitude of people will never sway us, but only the power of His Word. The true believers will always be in the minority.

Now the people are too democratic, and they reason that a multitude of votes will settle the truth. We are the remnant and the ridicule of the

world. There were about 32,000 men, and they were far too many for Gideon, as in this battle he wanted to prove God's upper hand.
Gideon told the people,"
Whoever is too timid or too afraid may leave and go home. "
We may reason that it was an ideal time for a good "pep talk", but not here. The people who were downcast were sent home. If we are ill-equipped, no "pep talk" will sway or help them. Our Lord needs to accomplish His work, and He can do that Himself; He is not dependent on us.
If we do contribute with a good heart, He will pay us generously. We are totally dependent on His grace, and Paul had the right spirit with the words:
"Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given to me" (Eph. 3:8).
Our lives on earth can either be employed for His work; otherwise, our lives on earth will be worthless.
After all, for many years after Paul's rebirth, since he went to Damascus, no one else spoke to him, besides the Spirit or God. Similarly, we too need to depend on His grace, and if we refuse it, our life will become senseless.
We must never deter God's work on earth, and during Paul's time, a high priest prophesied to the religious leaders, saying:
After that, 22,000 people left Mount Gilead, and Gideon was left with 10,000 men. We may question why Mount Gilead. During the time of Jacob, when Laban chased him, he took stones, and there he erected a monument. It was a monument or witness between Jacob and Laban. It endorses the agreement between them. Gilead reminded them of the conflict they once had, and that is reminiscent of the battle they were drawn into. The place reminds us of the Patriarch Jacob, who overcame the turmoil he once had with his father-in-law, Laban.
The 22,000 people at the monument will witness that, and they too will be saved from their enemy, even though they did not participate in the victory. In Christ, we are more than conquerors, and as the 22,000 people, we too were mere bystanders witnessing His victory at the cross.
"He has overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).
The 22 portrays the things we see, as procured by the Word of God. The things we see in our world are epitomised by the letter 4 (2 + 2). It is the concrete working of God's Word in our world, but it is brief. We may ask why. The reason is that the Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters. Everything God speaks is conveyed in the 22 letters, and that is now bearing fruit in the old creation. The 22,000 people are set apart, and they will witness what Gideon is doing for them. They remained outside, and per se they did not form part of the battle.
The Lord told Gideon that the 10,000 warriors were still too many, and He told him to make them drink at the spring. There He would decide who was equipped for the battle and who would go home. Gideon took his warriors down to the water, and afterwards he separated the warriors into two groups. The first group of men used their hands as a cup to sip the water. The other group knelt down to lap the water with their tongues.

Only the 300 men who drank the water from their hands were fit to fight with Gideon. All the men who bent down, lapping the water with their tongues, were sent home. The 10,000 men tested at the water – how they responded or handled the water. The 10,000 men portray the Word of God, as the 10 is God speaking to us. Most of the warriors were not equipped to deal with the Word of God, as they drank the water or the Word of God wrongly. We need to grasp the water with both our hands, and via our hands it needs to be swallowed. The hand is the Mediator who will procure our blessings.

The difficulty in choosing is not the water, but if we wish to drink the water; we need the Mediator or the Lord Jesus. He will enable us to use the water or the Word of God fittingly. If we allow Him (our Mediator or Christ), the Word will flood our lives. Without Him, the Scripture will be meaningless.

Gideon merely needed the small number of men who, via the symbolism, portrayed their faith in the Mediator. Early in the history of Israel, we mentioned the Amalekites, and their name implies a people of lapping. They discount the Mediator between God and us, as they never used their hands. It says that the Lord will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation (Ex. 17:16). That is happening today and also physically during the great tribulation, when the real enemy will emerge.

The hand with its five fingers is the Lord's hand of grace. Via the hand, we are enriched by His grace. We are His prized possession, and it is a graceful gesture to shake each other's hand. It shows we accept each other, including our mistakes. The word "hand" (yad) and "Jew" are derived from the same root word, even though it's not 100% the same. God accomplishes His work on earth via the hand – the "yad" or the Jews. The Lord Jesus was a Jew, and He is the hand of God. The Mediator is the Hand, and that is Christ or Israel, who is God's hand of grace. God brings about the change via the "yad" or Jew.

Throughout the times of the old covenant, the people were urged to do things themselves, as the Jews today who are absorbed with the idea to baptise themselves. In contrast, the new covenant is different, as we need to be baptised by another person or the Mediator, or the Lord Himself. He will redeem us from all our iniquities via the hand of His grace (Titus 2:14). We were baptised into His death, and now we are raised with His resurrection.

Belshazzar also saw the hand when it wrote against the wall (Dan. 5:5). It was the hand of God, and whatever He wrote on the wall would be accomplished; and similarly, Elijah also noticed the hand. "

Behold, there arises a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand!" (1 Kings 18:44).

When the Lord accepted the offering at Carmel, He appeared later to Elijah as a hand. That was the hand of His grace, and the cloud epitomises His grace. With that symbolism, the seven years of drought ended. That pictures the beginning of the new covenant or the times we now live in. The hand is the instrument to accomplish His will on earth, and it is none other than Christ our Mediator. If other people are involved in His work, they are either called Israel or the Church. We need our hands to speak,

as it gestures things difficult to convey. Via the hand, God spoke to us. Many may question whether the snake spoke in the Garden of Eden. Some Jews say no, as the snake needed their hands to speak with!
Previously, the hand of Moses went leprous, but immediately afterwards it was healed: "Furthermore the Lord said to him, 'Now put your hand in your bosom. ' When he put his hand in his bosom and withdrew it, behold, his hand was leprous, like snow. And He said, 'Put your hand in your bosom again. ' So he put his hand in his bosom again and pulled it out of his bosom; behold, it was restored like his other flesh" (Ex. 4:6–7).
The "yad" or the hand that went leprous is Israel. The hand that disappeared beneath the robe is Israel, who disappeared in exile. That epitomises our dispensation of grace, as Christ is involved with the Church and not Israel. Once, after the rapture, the hand of Moses will be withdrawn, and it will be restored, as Israel will be blessed during the Millennium. Throughout our dispensation, Israel rejected Christ, but the leprous hand will be healed. The hand could also be Christ, as He was rejected, but that same hand (Mediator) will return in glory.
The warriors had to drink the water or the Word of God, and they had to digest His Words. Via the 300 warriors, the Midianites would be conquered. He would give the Midianites into his hands (Judg. 7:7).
The 300 has both a positive or negative connotation. It involves the letter "H" as found in the name Abraham. God had a purpose when He changed his name from Abram to Abraham. The letter "H" has a numerical value of 5, and we can read the 300 with the letter "H" or without it. When we do, it has a positive connotation, and if not, it has a negative connotation. The letter "H" is shin with the dot on the left שׂ or the dot on the right שׁ.
The first time we read about the 300 is in Genesis 5:22, when Enoch lived for 300 years in a close relationship with God. He communed with God, as with the 300 men of Gideon. The length of the ark was 300 cubits (Gen. 6:15). Via the ark, the family of Noah were spared from the flood. Those who communed with God sat in the ark. The third time we read about the 300 is in the history of Joseph, when his brothers begged for food: "To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave 300 shekels of silver and five sets of clothing. " The silver is the price paid to redeem us, and remember Benjamin was the last son of Jacob. With all of the above examples, the 300 has a dot on the right of the letter "H", and the five sets of clothes portray our dispensation of grace. Benjamin portrays the remnant in Israel who were faithful to the Words of God. The word Benjamin means "the son of my right hand", and he portrays the Church. They were nearly alienated in Judges 21, but miraculously God left a remnant. Symbolically speaking, they are the 300 men. The fourth time we read of the 300 is in Judges 7, and here it has a positive connotation. The 300 is also portrayed negatively when Samson tied 300 foxes by their tails. That caused great havoc. In the Bible, the foxes share the looks of the false teachers. The Lord once told the religious leaders when some of the Pharisees said to Him, "Get away from here if you want to live! Herod Antipas wants to kill you!" Our Lord replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal the people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal'" (Luke 13:31–32). The leaders (foxes) misled the

people, and Herod was the embodiment of Satan himself. Many religious leaders regarded Herod Antipas as their Messiah. He was not a Shepherd, but a fox leading the people astray. The Lord merely needed the 300 men to procure a victory, and He had to send the other warriors back home. Gideon collected the provisions and the rams' horns from the other warriors and kept the 300 men with him. The Midianite camp was in the valley just below them. That night, the Lord told Gideon to get up and go down to the Midianite camp, for He would cause the victory!

Gideons victory

- Early morning/spring of Harod → Resurrection dawn; Church age (grace dispensation) beside living water (Word/Spirit).
- Reduction to 300 → Divine strength in weakness; faith in Mediator (lapping with hands = receiving via Christ/grace vs. direct kneeling = self-effort/law, akin to Amalek).
- Trumpets → Voice of resurrected Christ (breath/Spirit); proclamation of Word.
- Shattered jars → Breaking of flesh/old man (earthen vessels, 2 Cor. 4:7); death with Christ.
- Torches revealed → Light of new life/resurrection shining forth.
- Shout "Sword of the LORD and Gideon" → Word of God as sword (Heb. 4:12); victory already won at cross.
- Enemies' self-destruction → Satan's kingdom divided (Matt. 12:25); confusion when confronted with resurrection truth.
- Pursuit/capture of princes/kings → Ongoing mopping up; final judgment on law/shadow (Zebah/Zalmunna) vs. full light.

Believers stand in completed victory (Col. 2:15; Rom. 8:37)—not fighting for triumph but from it. Satan is defeated (head crushed); we resist by standing firm in grace, proclaiming the Word, letting flesh be "broken" to reveal Christ's light. Gideon's humble obedience foreshadows resting in Christ's finished work.

The Midianites were below them in the valley, and Israel was above on a mount. Physically, they towered over their enemies, as the remnant or the Church's rightful place is in heaven. We are chosen by God, as He told Gideon that He would sort out who would go with him and who would remain (Judg. 7:4). Throughout the time of Elijah, the remnant were those who did not bow their knees to Baal, and here the remnant are those who subject themselves to the Mediator. God will give them the victory, even though they are the minority. Even today, there is a remnant chosen by His grace (Rom. 11:5). I believe the Church is the true remnant of Israel,

as they are the chosen by God. Today, we are in heaven with Christ, and we soar above the calamities of our world with all its problems.

Now the Lord enticed Gideon to go down to the Midianites and listen to what they were talking about. It would boost his confidence. Today, the Lord has a similar message to us, as we too can listen to the world and read the thoughts of the world. Gideon had to go down to their camp, even though it was dangerous, but Gideon knew that his victory was clinched. Similarly, David went into the cave where Saul slept to sever the hem of his garment. That too was dangerous, but he was assured he would be the next king. God promised him the victory, and even today, when we are confronted with the enemy, we can be fearless.
God told Gideon if he was still afraid to go down to the camp, he could take his servant Purah with him.
"Listen to what the Midianites are telling you, and you will be encouraged. Then you will be ready to attack them.
"The word "servant" in Hebrew means a boy or a youth, and they portray the younger generation in Christ. We are the firstborn of the new creation. The word Purah means fruit or the leaves of a tree. The word Ephraim is also tied to the word fruit, as Purah. The leaves are the ornament, and the fruit is the resurrected Christ. So Gideon took Purah with him, and he went down to the edge of the enemy's camp. The armies from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east had settled in the valley, and they amassed like a swarm of locusts. The locust is likened to a swarm of people who spoiled their harvest. Their camels were like grains of sand on the seashore – too many to count. That night, a man awoke from the camp with a nightmare. The dream was so bizarre. The man said in the dream he saw a loaf of barley bread tumbling down into the camp where the Midianites lived. It hit a tent, turning it upside down and knocking it flat. He had an obvious nightmare when a roasted barley bread or a UFO collided with the tent. His companion or Purah interpreted the dream and said it could only imply that God had given Gideon the upper hand over all the Midianites and its many allies.
The word "barley" is derived from the word "seir" or "hair" that distinguishes the barley from the wheat. Barley has masses of "awns", and the hair distinguishes them from the wheat. Barley or "seir" is similar to the word Sarah or Sar, meaning a prince or kingship. The barley denotes the kingship, and when the little boy gave five barley loaves to the Lord (John 6), it portrays Christ's kingdom. The five conveys the unseen things and the grace we are endowed with.
Many argue today that that typology is far too dangerous to handle. It was the contrary with Purah, who, as a young boy, was not frightened but rapidly gathered the meaning of the word "tent". The spindling or rotating barley bread denotes rebirth, as the word "spindling" is derived from the word "gilgal" or rebirth. The barley is Gideon and his warriors, and the tent is their enemies; their stay in the tent is brief, and it will be turned upside down. God gave the enemies into his hand! Our world is fleeting, and it will be overturned and crumble. The house is built on a rock, in contrast to a tent with its insecure tent pegs.

Earlier in the Book of Judges, Sisera was pierced by a tent peg (Judg. 4:21), and he died when the tent fell down on him.
Midian means "to strive", and today they portray the political conflict amongst the nations. They endlessly contest each other. The Midianites epitomise our world, and when Christ appears, everything will be restructured. The people who humbled themselves will be exalted, and the people who esteem themselves will be humiliated.
The tent of the Midianites was overturned, and Purah said it was the sword of the Lord. The sword of Gideon is the word of Gideon, or God's Word. When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshipped the Lord. Then he returned to the Israelite camp and shouted, "Get up! For the LORD has given you the victory over the Midianites. " When we agree and acquaint ourselves with the idea that God will cause the victory, we too need to worship Him as Gideon. The victory is procured, even though it's not accomplished today. Whenever in the Old Testament our victory was promised, the prophets used to worship God. The irony is that God entrusted it to Gideon, but the Midianites had the same impression. They knew, and I am sure today the world is well aware, as Satan, who is their captain. Their foundations shook when Christ ascended from the dead (1 Cor. 2:8). Satan's head is trodden upon, and no strength remains in him. We too will share in the victory of Gideon, and if we study our newspapers, we realise that they are well aware of the pending threats. Now both the Jews and Christendom are targets, as to the world we remain a great threat. We are His small remnant and maybe persecuted, but we are assured of our final victory. The Church is victorious, and after the rapture, all of Israel who repent will conquer the world. Whenever we quote the Bible, our bond with the unbelieving world will be severed all the more.
Gideon woke his men early in the morning and spurred them to defeat their enemy. With the crowing of the rooster, the 300 men were ready with Gideon's command. The crowing rooster is the voice of the resurrected Lord, and similarly the blowing of the horn. Both the men of Gideon and the Midianites were aware of the outcome. Gideon merely had to orchestrate that. He divided the 300 men into three groups and gave each man a ram's horn and a clay jar with a torch inside. The three groups portray the third day, and everything it entails. The men merely had to imitate Gideon, their leader.
Gideon told the people to keep their eyes fixed on Him. "Watch me, and when I come to the edge of the camp, you too shall do similarly: as soon as I blow the rams' horns, blow yours too, and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon!'
"So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they posted the watch.
Gideon blew the trumpets and broke the clay jars that were in his hand. Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the clay jars – they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing – and they cried, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" Then every man stood in his place all around the camp, and the whole army ran and cried out and fled. When the 300 blew the trumpets, the

Lord set every man's sword against each other throughout the whole camp, and the army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, by Tabbath.
The men of Israel gathered together from the tribes of Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh, and they pursued the Midianites. Zebulun is not named, but he may have been mentioned with the tribe of Naphtali. Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the mountains of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan. " Then all the men of Ephraim gathered together and seized the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan. And they captured the two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued the Midianites and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan (Judg. 7:18–25).
The 300 men were split into three groups, and each had a trumpet and an empty clay jar with a fire inside. That is unlike the armour of Ephesians 6 with the breastplate, shield, and the helmet. Gideon blew the trumpet, and symbolically it echoed the voice of the Shepherd, which was dead and yet it is alive today. As with Adam, God breathed inside of him the breath of life. That same "life-giving breath" is blown inside the ram's horn. David once said:
"He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold" (Ps. 18:2).
Once the Spirit or the letter "H" is blown into it, the "horn" will come alive. The voice of the mighty trumpet is the voice of Christ, and via that blowing, His death and the resurrection are epitomised.
The empty clay jar is an empty earthenware, which is shaped by the potter. We often read of the clay, especially in the history of Israel, by the prophets and even in the New Testament. Clay is made from the dust of the world, and everything on earth is created from it, whether it is the minerals, the plants, or the animal world. The clay is created with much water or the Word of God, and that is how it came about. We are made of the dust of the earth, and we are delicate and ceramic. Via the Word, the earth is created. When the clay collects too much water or becomes soggy like mud and useless, it portrays Israel handling the Word of God erroneously, with the idea to profit themselves. They read the Word but fail to see Christ inside its pages.
We, as the Church, are like a vessel God made of clay; it was marred in the hand of the potter, so He made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter's eye (Jer. 18:4).
Some of the vessels the potter made were to His honour and not the others. The honourable vessels are those who obey His Word. Paul says we have a treasure within our vessels.
"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7). It entered our bodies via our ears, and we can speak them. Many psychiatrists are familiar with the words: "I feel empty inside. " If we do not accept the Word of God, we will remain empty, and that attitude will always haunt us. Our greatest concern on earth is to fill our vessels with the excellence of His power. That will not happen spontaneously, as we need to acquaint ourselves

with His Word. If we refuse, we will sound hollow, and that is why we sound so loud. Any clay pot that is soaked in water will burst until nothing is left of the jar except a few broken remnants.
We may question the use of the jar, and if Gideon shattered them to pieces, what is the use of them? We can argue why we were created from the dust of the earth if our remains return to dust.
The reason is we are born empty, and we need to be filled; otherwise, we will relinquish our rationale to live.
What needs to emerge from us is the second Adam, as our clay shell will shatter.
It says that the Lord Jesus emptied Himself, and with His birth He was born empty. He retained the Words of God, and it filled Him, and His faith made Him die on the cross. He rose triumphantly, and God returned everything He lost, as He exchanged the old for the new creation (Phil. 2:5–11). Peter says that God has given us His rich and wonderful promises, with the intention that through them we may share His divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). Paul beseeched us to be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19). In the future, our earthen vessel will break, and then we will see what is inside of them. We may be filled with the water, wine, or the oil, as together they epitomise the new. Our Lord even turned the water into wine, and we too can master it if we allow the water (His Word) to permeate our bodies to yield the wine or the new life! The clay is short-lived, and we need to be filled. How Gideon managed to keep the fire inside the clay jar remains a puzzle, or he may have lighted them before he broke the clay jar.
Gideon told them to look at me. Our aim today is to fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus, as He is the author and the perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:1). In Hebrews 11, we have many more examples of faith, and Gideon is one of them. Our Lord is the greatest leader, as He endured the cross, its scorn, and its shame.
Gideon told them, "Look at me", and they had to mimic him. Our Lord also left us a great example. Whenever we ask any Christians for what reason our Lord came to earth, they will quickly reply He came to leave us an example. Is it the times when He cursed the Pharisees, naming them hypocrites? That is wrong, as the example we need to follow is the benchmark of His faith. The most important is to find why at times He cursed the Pharisees and why He accepted the poor. The answer is simple. When the people loved the Word, He loved them as well, and if they hated the Word, He too hated them.
Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, we too need to look at Him, and if we fix our eyes on Him, we will be healed, as the Israelites in the desert. Peter and John looked straight at a lame man, and then Peter told him, "Look at us!" (Acts 3:4).
In faith, the lame man only looked at them, and nothing more was needed, and he was healed. The men with Gideon had to look and do what Gideon did to defeat the enemy. If he blew the trumpet, they too needed to repeat him: "to the Lord and for Gideon. " They obeyed him, as Gideon mirrored the Lord. That may sound absurd to the Jew, as they argue there is only one God (Deut. 6:4). That day, the might of Gideon

was the power of God. The 300 warriors could also have said: "to the Lord, namely Gideon.
"They broke the clay jar, and I am sure the breaking clay jar did not cause a great sound as compared to the blowing of the horn. The Lord fought the Midianites, and the breaking of the clay is our death. The light inside the clay jar was elevated, and that is the new man in Christ; the old covenant is exchanged for the new covenant, causing the old enemy to flee. The Lord fought the Midianites. The chaos is not the breaking of the clay but the voice of the previously slain Lamb. The old is discarded, and the light of the new is shining. The symbolism here portrays the new life, and Nicodemus also needed to understand it (John 3). The three groups of 100 men portray Christ's resurrection on the third day. In Hebrew, the trumpets or "shofar" have a numerical value of 580, and that is the new life, as both the 5 and the 8 convey truth concerning our dispensation. When the 300 men broke the clay jars, they shouted: "the sword of the Lord and Gideon. " Each warrior stood firmly in his place, and they did nothing else. The frightened Midianites fled away. Physically, the sword was not there, but symbolically it was. The voice from the trumpet is the sword or the Word of God.
The enemies became disillusioned, and that is the means by which God conquered His enemies many a time. It was the sword, and it may have looked different to them, and we need to grasp that. Previously, about 1,000 years ago, the Crusaders used the sword, and they failed. They needed the Word of God and the message of death and resurrection. That is our real message. The sound is the Word of God, and the "lightning" is equated to the striking sword. It will cause the victory, and each had to remain standing, and the Midianites caused them no harm. They stood around the camp, and the Midianites must have fled between them, but they remained standing. Paul says we too need to stand and remain erect against the devil (Eph. 6:13–15). We stand in His grace and do not abide by the principles of the law (Rom. 5:2). Satan will try to wedge us from our secure place, and that is our battle. We do not need to wrestle with him, as the battle is already won – we merely need to remain on our feet and claim the victory we already won in Christ. We are not caught in a battle to triumph in the world; we are called conquerors simply by standing to sustain our victory.
Many may argue all this is far too simple, and they will quickly ploy us into battle, and that will tire us excessively. Often our Lord was tempted, and His only answer was: "Is this not what is written?" At the cross, the enemy is dealt with, and the only influence he has is to sway the old man or the clay that is shattered to bits.
The blowing horn echoes the Words of God. That was enough to scatter the enemies, and the torch is the Light of His Word. The clay is broken, and as long as the clay jars remained intact, there was no victory for Gideon. We need to relinquish the old man in exchange for the new. If Satan is eager to exhibit our guilt, we need to stand firm to direct him to Calvary. There, everything is atoned for. The juridical Satan cannot tackle us, as the clay is broken, and the light – the new life of Christ – is shining in our decaying bodies. That is easy to appreciate, and it is vividly

portrayed by Gideon. If the clay is not broken, there is no victory, but once it breaks, we are totally secured a victory.
Each man stood at his position around the camp and watched as all the Midianites rushed around in great panic; they shouted as they ran to escape. The Lord scared them, and He caused the warriors in the camp to fight each other with their swords.
Shamefully today, religion is blamed for all the wars, and usually the religions oppose the claims of Christ. I believe many great religions were triggered by the demons to divert the real Christians away from Christ. We can think of many religions who commenced by seeing an angel – and I do not contest that, as the "angels" are disguised as evil forces and not as Jehovah. Many quote the Bible to confuse the non-believers even more – and remember, Satan wishes us to be pompous, religious, and steeped in good works. Those of us who think by adhering to the laws of Moses will augment them will easily be diverted away from Christ, thinking their efforts will suffice. In the end, it creates strife, and that is easily pictured when the Midianites fought each other. Our religion is to dedicate our bodies to God, and anything more will veer us away from Him. We need to be filled with His Spirit, realising that once we accepted Christ, we forfeited all our privilege on earth. The great religions of the world today stem from our father Abraham, and that is the continual conflict between Esau and Jacob, and that is still evident today. On the other extreme, many refuse any religious dogma, as the communists who are atheists. Our Lord Himself once said:
"Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand" (Matt. 12:25). We may question which kingdom is divided. The Midianites caused great havoc when they were divided amongst themselves, involving the other enemies. Similarly, after the rapture of the Church, there will be great confusion amongst the people, and they will tolerate all the beliefs of Satan. Once the 300 men shouted and blew their trumpet, the enemies fled, as the power or the sound of the trumpet overpowered them.
The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. They are difficult names, and Beth-shittah is similar to Beth Shittim (house of the shittim tree), and shittim was the wood used for the tabernacle belonging to the old covenant, and the ark was framed from shittim wood plated with gold. In Hebrew, the word shittim (Str. no. 7848) is very similar to Satan (Str. no. 7853). Natural man or the wood is hacked and is used for the tabernacle. Shittim is the old man, and symbolically it will be chopped down to be crafted to be part of God's tabernacle or temple. Here, the word Beth-shittah has a negative connotation, meaning the house (beth) of the adversary or Satan (shittim). The wood from Beth-shittah, which is chopped down, is not planned to build the tabernacle. It is the territory of Midian, as in Israel they were persecuted. They fled to the house of the adversary towards Zererah, and that place may convey the chilliness, especially after a heated battle. Abel-meholah near Tabbath means emptiness (Abel) and a meadow of dancing. They were stopped in their roots, as they did not

dance, and they were surprised when Gideon caught them. Tabbath means to celebrate, but it's uncertain.
@@Then Gideon sent for the warriors of Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh, who joined them in chasing the army of Midian. More than likely Zebulon accompanied the tribe of Naphtali.
The tribes chased the Midianites and en-route Gideon also sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, saying; Come down to attack the Midianites. Cut them off at the shallows of the Jordan River at Beth-barah. The men of Ephraim obeyed Gideon, and they deterred the Midianites away from their borders. They captured Oreb and Zeeb, the two Midianite generals, killing Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. And they continued to chase the Midianites. Afterward the Israelites brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was by the Jordan.
The Midianites fled to Beth-barah, but the place was guarded by both the tribes Manasseh and **Ephraim**; The two tribes that were responsible for the great victory are the sons of Joseph. In that battle, they worked together. Manasseh was heavily involved, and now it seemed that Ephraim killed the 2 king and they easily captured the bait. Now there is a discord amongst them.
Ephraim spoke to Gideon saying: What is that thing you had done to us, not calling us when you went to fight against Midian? The people of Ephraim contended with him vigorously. But Gideon replied, what have I done compared to you? Aren't the last grapes of Ephraim's harvest better than the entire crop of my little clan of Abiezer? God gave you victory over Oreb and Zeeb, the generals of the Midianite army. What have I done compared to that? When the men of Ephraim heard Gideon's answer, their anger left them. Ephraim caught the 2 great fishes namely Oreb and Zeeb even though Gideon did trigger the victory over the Midianites. Gideon told Ephraim to put everything in perspective, as they have the trophy of the 2 kings.
In a tropical climate, you can plan two harvests in a year, an early and late harvest. The last grapes of Ephraim's harvest is better than the first crop of Gideon’s. Symbolically the first harvesting of the grapes is Gideon fighting the Mideanites. The choice of the crop is the second harvest and Ephraim took the pick when he killed their two kings. Ephraim did their share, and there is no need for any dispute. Manasseh took the initiative and Ephraim killed both the kings of the Midianites. Manasseh was present all the time, but Ephraim was the first to kill the 2 kings and the question is who the first is? We find a similar dispute between Jacob and Esau.
At Oreb they killed the two kings and the place means hunger and the root word is raven or death. The word raven portrays the death. Everything there will end at death’s door, and if they do dare to raise their head, it will be levelled to the ground. It suggest no-one is allowed to raise their head otherwise it will be chopped down. The people living there were all equal. Nothing distinguished them from the other. There is no segregation amongst them, and in that milieu they need no law or grace. Foolishly the people thought they are ‘like god.’ That is similar to the teachings of the new age movement in which man is central. They regard man as divine, a

co-creator thinking they will promote peace and harmony. A typical saying amongst them is ‘I am swayed only by my thoughts.’
Oreb is placed at a plain, an expanse of land and it is flat with hardly any valleys or peaks. Oreb (Str. no. 6158) stems from the word Arabs (Str. no. 6150). The Arabian continent is rather dull and flat. In this chapter, one of the Midianite kings is tied to the Arabians, and today we can assume the Arabians are also the Midianites. The word Zeeb means a ‘wolf’, portraying death as they chase the sheep, making them the prime enemies of Israel.
In Psalm 83:11 and Isaiah 10:26 the kings are named once more and the victory is tied to both Ephraim and Manasseh – and together they personify Joseph.
The story does not end there as there were two more kings. Gideon then crossed the Jordan River with his 300 men, and even though they were exhausted, they continued to chase them.
When they reached Succoth, Gideon asked the leaders of the town, ‘Will you please give my warriors some food? They are very tired. I am chasing both Zebah and Zalmunna, who are the kings of Midian.’ They sneered at Gideon saying: ‘You haven’t caught Zebah and Zalmunna yet. Catch them first, and then we will feed your warriors.
’Gideon replied saying after the Lord causes the victory over Zebah and Zalmunna, I will return and tear your flesh with the thorns and briers of the wilderness.
The first two kings were caught by Ephraim and the remaining two kings will be caught by Manasseh.
There is, however, similarity but also a great contrast in their names. The word Zebah means slaying of the dead and death. It could be the slaying of all the offerings they sacrificed as in the Old Testament. Zalmunna in Hebrew means the shadow is restrained. That is impossible as one may block any light source but not its shadow. In the New Testament Paul mentions the shadow:
‘For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect’ (Heb. 10:1). It is easy to deduce that the shadow is the law, and the real light is Christ. The law is a mere shadow portraying the promises that will later appear. Simply said it has the contours of the new covenant. The law with all its offerings cannot redeem any person because they are only a shadow. It is pointless to clutch or ‘hold unto’ the shadow and ignore the real light who is Christ. The many offerings will never suffice, and if we fail to respect the real issues, we are left with the shadow. For such a person their fortitude is Zebah and Zalmunna. The enemy we deal with here is not outside the borders of Israel, but they live inside its borders, and when we study this passage and reason why Israel welcomed them.
They are sceptical continually needing someone to teach them the basic things (Heb. 5:12). Within the law there are great disputes, and they are continually faced with the question ‘is that allowed or not?’ The great arguments we do find in the Gospels and in the early Church’s history do always involve the law. Midian means to dispute. Since our Lord

resurrected from the dead via the breaking of the clay and lifting the light, there remains a persistent obstacle. Even if they defeated the Midianites and benefit from God's bountiful grace, there lurks a shadow of the old. The Jews and many Christians adhere to the shadow and fail to respect the real matters of the new covenant. For them all that is left is the continual slaying of the offerings trying to appease God. That is explained in the names of the two kings, and that battle involved the people who lived after Christ's resurrection; or those who refused to accept the crucial victory of Gideon.

It involves the matters of our world and its hierarchy. The principles of the law are pinned to our world. It says: See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ (Col. 2:8). Since they died with Christ and to the basic principles of the world, why do some continue as if they belonged to the world, yielding to its many rules (Col. 2:20)?

We need the guidance of Christ and the futility of the law will become apparent. We can feast on the real and refuse the joke of the law. Those who submit themselves to laws will vanish as epitomised by the death of the two kings.

That battle involves both Zalmunna and Zebah. The first two kings were mastered by the tribe of Ephraim picturing the quest of the Church. Now the time of the other two kings portrays the time of the Church or our time of waiting. Our struggle is to remain standing against Midianites who are already slain, as both Zalmunna and Zebah can taunt us. Paul said: 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free' (Gal. 5:1).

The enemy is within the camp of Israel, and its philosophies are still valid today. If we wish to adhere to them, we are caught in slavery. We were freed from both the sin and the law, and they are the two pillars of the enemy. We need to be redeemed from the law that is tied to the old creation. It lures our flesh.

Even in the times of the Old Testament we are reminded that they need to distance themselves from the law. It crumbled to the ground due to its own weight, as its pillars cannot sustain them. 'But the word of the Lord was to them, "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little," that they might go and fall backward, and be broken and snared and caught' (Isa. 28:13). We can view the law and need to agree it is totally fulfilled in Christ, and no one else. The law is not a means to try and please our flesh, thinking we can better ourselves. We need to let the old go in return for the new. We need to decide to let the 'one' go in preference to the other.

In the new creation there will be no shadow, and all the stones will be precious retaining the light to disperse it. In the new creation the shadow is regarded as darkness. In the new heavens and earth the light of the new creation will permeate everything, as nothing can withstand it. The precious stones (Rev. 21:11) do picture His remnant. They bear witness to the resurrection because they allow the light, or the Word of God. His sheer magnificence will penetrate us. Even though today we live in a

world of darkness, we retain the light, but the darkness causes the confusion and the constant battle.
Gideon wanted some respite at Succoth, but the people sneered at him. Succoth has a very positive connotation, as it was the place where Jacob erected booths for his cattle, and a dwelling for himself. Apparently it is situated east of the River Jordan near a stream which intersects the mountain range of Gilead, and falls into the Jordan, midway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. That land was allocated to the tribe of Gad. Succoth means a booth or hut and the feast of Succoth is known to us. That feast was to remind Israel of the time they lived in the desert. Masses of people lived temporarily in many tents, and that epitomised the fleeting nature of their stay in the desert. They were en route to a better place. That feast lasted seven days, but there was an eighth day that speaks of the new creation. During that time Israel commemorated their 40 years' stay in the desert travelling to the Promised Land.
That feast pictures the time from Adam until the last day, as we too live in a tent awaiting our true dwelling. The feast of booths portrays our fifth dispensation, and we are en route to a new home, awaiting our eternal position. We left behind us a doomed world with all its sin, and our home is in heaven. We are pilgrims, and that portrays our sojourn here on earth. We live as Abraham in tents.
In the past Succoth vividly portrays Israel living under the Law of Moses, awaiting their promises. Israel was the only nation that was led by God in the wilderness. They received the law as part of the old covenant in expectation of the new covenant.
We already received all our blessings, and yet we need to wait for them. After Jacob and Esau saw eye to eye and all their grievances were settled, Jacob went to Succoth and there he built tents for his cattle. Succoth was positioned close to Shechem and later in the chapter we will return to Shechem. Sychar in John 4 is probably another name for Succoth or Shechem, a town in Samaria near the well of Jacob. There our Lord met the Samaritan woman.
Now in many countries and especially in sparsely populated places, a hut or a Succoth is left in the countryside for travellers to stay overnight, and primarily when they go mountain climbing. At Palestine the Lord gave Israel temporary houses, and that was fleeting under the old covenant. When Gideon approached the men he asked Israel or the people who lived under the old covenant to give them bread, as the bread portrays eternal life.
Israel, who had the Word of God, should have given the bread naturally to them as they were entrusted with the Word of God or the Bread of Life. They simply refused. The leaders of Succoth told him: are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands that we should give bread to your army? They reasoned if there is no victory they will give them any food. They did not believe that our Lord was victorious when He resurrected from the dead, or that Gideon did conquer the enemy.
They said: seeing is believing.
They did not desire to share the victory over the Midianites or the old covenant, and they were to realise that the law is a mere shadow of the

real Light or Christ. They sided with the enemy or the two kings. That is the attitude of the Jews living as part of the old covenant, and they could easily have been the leaders of the Jewish faith or the Pharisees. It illustrates the ignorance of the Jewish nation or any person who refuses Christ.
Gideon was hurt and said that when he returns with both Zebah and Zalmunna, he will thrash their bodies with the thorns from the wilderness. Gideon did familiarise himself with typology as the elders will be punished with thorns from the desert. In the next chapter we do read yet again about the thorn bush, when it says that the thorn tree – or the old covenant that rules natural Israel today.
Gideon told them if he returns from the victory he will thrash their bodies with thorns. Thorns don't rule but they chastise the people. That epitomises the people who refuse the grace of God and those who prefer the 'laws' of Moses. Indeed that judgement will be procured with Christ's return to earth. Our world is filled with the thorns and the thistles (Gen. 3:18) and it will punish the people who adhere to the law. The battle is won, and we don't need to be punished with them, but it's inevitable to those who discount Christ's work for us. If they didn't accept the victory they had over the Midianites, they will be punished. That is not mentioned once but twice in the following verse.
Gideon went up from there to Penuel and spoke similarly to them, and the men of Penuel answered him just as the men of Succoth did. Penuel or Peniel is the countenance of God. At that place they saw the countenance of God.
'So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared"' (Gen. 32:30).
That is where Jacob or Israel saw the Lord face to face. It is similar to Succoth where God lived with Israel as part of the old covenant. There was another Succoth in Egypt, and it was the first stopover for the Israelites when they left Egypt (Ex. 12:37). They lived in huts (Succoth), and they experienced the countenance of the Lord as Jonah. Jonah fled from the presence of God and the people knew he saw the countenance or the face of God; it was obvious and he revealed it to them (Jonah 1:10). Succoth is Israel living under the principles of the old covenant, and they are directed by the countenance of God. That is to worship and to obey God. Jonah disobeyed Him, and he was thrown into the waters.
Gideon begged for bread, but the people of Penuel refused him the bread. Gideon replied saying when he returns in peace he will tear down their tower. In future our Lord will return as the Prince of Peace, and He will hack down the tower that stood in Penuel.
We acquaint ourselves with the symbolism of the towers or the Church spires. What about the 18 people who died when the tower at Siloam fell on them? (Luke 13:4) That portrays the judgement that will befall Israel. At Babylon the tower also tumbled, and the people were in a frenzy when they spoke in different languages. We may reason that we are blessed with the immense Church tower and we are suitable to approach God? That is wrong as nothing of our doing will get us there, and Gideon did

right in axing the wood. Gideon or God will punish the religious people who refuse to worship the risen Christ, who believe in their own works.
Now Zebah and Zalmunna were at Karkor with about 15,000 warriors. They were the only ones who survived the initial onslaught and there used to be 120,000 swordsmen.
Karkor is Qar-qor combining two words meaning ‘to dig’ as digging a foundation. It is similar to the word Gilgal as that word is also joined by two related words gil-gal.
‘That day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto that day’ (Josh. 5:9).
Why is it called twice with similar words? In Hebrew ‘Gilgal’ means ‘to roll’ as rolling (or cutting) the flesh from us. The wheel is tied to the word and the purpose of the wheel is to roll for the second time. The mere practice of the circumcision is to roll away or tear the flesh or the prepuce from our body, and it pictures our rebirth. We are born again for the second time.
Kar kar literally means to dig anew or to dig again for the second time. The digging is to secure the foundation that was previously laid down. It mirrors Israel who probes once more at the foundations in search for the rudiments of our old fallen world. It’s so off beam. Our heritage is tainted by sin and even though our feet are fixed on our world, we need to seek the things which are above (Col. 3:1). We need to free ourselves, and if we return to the earth we will be digging the old rudiments of our world. Paul once said: ‘For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor’ (Gal. 2:18). We do live on earth, but we are encouraged to seek the things above – our rightful place is in heaven (Eph. 1:3; 2:6).
Peter had to learn with Christ’s redeeming work we need to live as the heathen do even to the extent to eat the unclean things. Paul reprimanded Peter as he tried to wedge himself with the Jewish sector supporting their ethical issues.
‘But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?” … We are not justified by the works of the law but by our faith in Jesus Christ … for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified’ (Gal. 2:14–16).
To break a building down with the idea to rebuild it is wrong and time wasting. The original design failed, and it proved a costly exercise. To return to the first principles of the earth or to its wavering foundations is wrong. Many believe in reincarnation, thinking our lives will continually improve including our unsure foundation.
We need to be endowed with the spirit as the ‘new’ is from above, and Nicodemus had to learn that. He realised our rebirth is to ascend from a lower order to a greater one. If we dare to rebuild the old, we will plunge ourselves into slavery. That is to build with wood, hay and stubble (1 Cor. 3:12). It is the works of the old man, and that will vanish.
The two kings trusted in the first principles of the world, digging its roots. Similarly the unbelieving Israelites who were called by God favoured the

shadow to the real Light who is Christ. They secured the old foundations aiming to build a tower, but it's all in vain.
The Midianites had an army of 120,000 men, and with the number 12 they thought they ruled the Israelites, but instead they got killed.
Gideon went up by the way of those who lived in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and he attacked the camp when they were easy to fool.
Nobah means barking and during their frenzy like a pack of dogs they targeted Israel to hunt the sheep. Jogbehah means lofty or being proud. It is a dog barking with a great voice; their cry is meaningless, and they sound exhausted as they have no zest inside of them. They do not belong to the herd and were caught unsuspected. They thought nothing will happen to them.
Gideon pursued both Zebah and Zalmunna, and he captured the two kings, bewildering the army.
Gideon returned from the battle before sunrise. The rising of the sun is tied with Christ's return to earth, and the ensuing great tribulation. Gideon detained a youth from Succoth and he questioned him. The youth named all the 77 princes from Succoth who taunted Gideon, as the youth knew the people who ruled the city. He helped Gideon to capture them.
Gideon spoke to the men of Succoth and said, behold Zebah and Zalmunna are captured, and you teased me saying: are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that I should give you bread to your weary men?
Gideon took the elders of the city, and with the thorns of the wilderness he disciplined them. They refused to believe that Gideon attained the victory and the seventy-seven men were chastised with the briers. The thorns and briers are the Midianites and the laws of the old creation. They needed to learn that the thorns and the briers are totally part of the old creation.
Gideon tore down the tower of Penuel, and he killed the men of the city. It is uncertain if they were all the men of the city.
Then he spoke to both Zebah and Zalmunna, and he asked them what sort of men did you kill at Tabor? He replied they were men like you, each one resembling the son of a king. Nowhere in the Bible do we read of this happening at Tabor. The two kings were responsible for the death of the sacred men at Tabor. Tabor is a mountain on the border of Naphtali and Zebulun, and the mountain top is compared to Mount Hermon having a snow cap. Tabor had a mountain dome as a rock. The dome is circular, and it portrays eternity. The word Tabor means 'mound' – stemming from the word 'to break' or to be set apart. It is Israel as a glorified mountain, set apart from the other nations and they are chosen by God. It is a perfect dome, and many believe that the mountain was the place where our Lord Jesus was glorified. The 10 tribes of Israel were hidden there, but here both Naphtali and Zebulun are named, and that is also the place where our Lord once sojourned.
Gideon asked them three times which men he killed on the mountain? They constantly said that they were men like you or your brothers. They said they resembled the sons of a king or the Lord. They resembled the

risen Christ, and they are the true remnant or the Christians. Figuratively they were martyred during the past 2000 years. Many gruesome tales taint our history books and many wish to brush them aside. The greatest reason for wars today is religion, and many true Christians were burned at the stake – too gruesome to mention. The people who held tight to the rudiments of our world, killing the real remnant will be punished. The real remnant today is the believing Church, and they live on Mount Tabor as Christ is our rock and it has a sure foundation. The real family of Gideon is the remnant and not Israel today.
Gideon said to Jether his firstborn son, rise and kill the two kings, but the youth did not draw his sword as he was too frightened. He was a youth. Gideon had 70 sons and Jether was his first son. His name implies abundance or to be glorified. He portrays the remnant of Christ, who is now the Church and with Him we will judge the world. Yet Jether refused to slay the two kings, but in the end Gideon, who epitomises Christ, did slay them. Both Zebah and Zalmunna taunted him to a duel and said: rise up yourself and fall on us; for as the man is, so is his strength – now show me your worth. Gideon did slay them, and he took the crescent ornaments which were on their camels' necks. In future Christ will punish the unbelievers with the Sword or His Word. The battle was won with no other sword, as they merely had the clay pots with the fire, but not the sword. The crescents or the ornaments on their camels' necks were possible moons. One translation says: and he took the moons that were on their camels' necks (Darby Translation). Actually the moon crescent and the star pre-dates Islam by several thousand years. The crescents portray Israel living under the law; the tide of the moon is tied to their festivities as at the time of the Passover when it is full moon. Israel had many feasts and the greatest were in their 1st or 7th month, depending when it was new or full moon. That is Israel living under the law. Gideon took the crescent or the moon with its many symbolisms, as now they can worship the true God or the sun. Ishmael is the brother nation of Israel, and the moon earmarks their religious festivities. There are many more brother nations of Israel, and we recognise them by the crescent with the moon and star. They are universal and on each mosque.

Judges 9
Abimelech

The following verse condenses this chapter when Gideon said he refused to be named a king. The men of Israel insisted and said:
'Rule over us, both you and your son, also your son's son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian' (8:22).
They continued demanding that Gideon should rule over them, and even his sons and their sons. He did prove his worth and therefore the natural choice. He refused and said his sons will not rule over them. He reminded them that the Lord will rule them as in the last verse of this Book.
'In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes' (21:25). That substantiates the time of the judges as each

did what was right in their own eyes. Even Abimelech, who became king, disregarded the wishes of his father.
Gideon had 70 sons having many wives. The ‘many sons from his hip’ denotes procreation. He had many wives and a concubine at Shechem. Their son was Abimelech. In Hebrew the name Abimelech can be broken down to ‘my father is king’ as king is melek. That implies that Gideon’s rightful ‘Father’ is in heaven, and He is king and not Gideon. Gideon was never crowned as king and Abimelech assumed it erroneously. In the end Abimelech did claim the throne, but it was his own initiative.
Since Gideon’s great battle nothing much is said of him except mentioning the 70 sons. Jotham was his youngest. Since Gideon’s death nothing much happened, and this chapter in Israel’s history proved fatal, until the time when Jephthah and Samson ruled.
Once Gideon died the sons of Israel worshipped other gods and especially Baal, and they proclaimed Baal-berith their god. Baal-berith means the lord of the covenant. It can easily imply the Lord Jesus – as Baal means Lord and berith means covenant.
The word British in Hebrew means the ‘people of the Covenant’. Perhaps it is a mere coincidence that the English word ‘British’ can be broken down in Hebrew as the ‘covenant people’. Both words ‘Berith’ (covenant) and ‘Ish’ (man) united create the word British. Berith in Hebrew is covenant, and the Israelites are known as the people of the covenant.
‘Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant (berith), then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession’ (Ex. 19:5).
Britain today could easily be called the place of the covenant, with the ‘covenant people’ dwelling on the island. There is no concrete evidence.
The title Baal-berith belongs firstly to the Lord Himself – and they deceived the people, making them believe that their ‘god’ resembles Jehovah. Israel of old did not obey the real Lord of the covenant. They deceitfully called themselves the people of the covenant, insulting the real God of heaven.
Gideon melted the gold from the earrings, and he made an ephod and placed it in his city, Ophrah. Gideon had good intentions but the people of Israel used it to worship the other gods. It became a snare unto them. The ephod used to be carried by the high priest. Study notes on tabernacle. It is wrong to blame Gideon who made the ephod, thinking he steered the people away from God. This history is often criticised making people think Gideon initiated the idol worship. His fellow men twisted the truth of the ephod to downgrade it to be part of their idolatry. The people felt secure with Baal-berith (Lord of the covenant) and the ephod, but they did not regard Jehovah who delivered them from all the enemies. They showed no kindness to the family of Gideon even after all the goodness he did.
Abimelech the son of Gideon went to Shechem to his mother’s relatives and spoke to them saying: is it better that all the 70 sons of Gideon rule over you or is it better that one man rule over you? Abimelech was the son of Gideon and his goal was to become king once his father died, and he ruled for three years. At first he won the support of the members of his mother’s family, and they tricked all of Israel to believe his fabricated lies.

The people were not that democratic and chanted it is best to be ruled by the one instead of the 70.
At Ophrah he killed all the sons of his father who belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. Jotham the youngest son was the only son to escape. After that horrific incident Abimelech was made ruler by an assembly of the people at Shechem.
The insurrection was led by Gaal, and it ended by a woman who dropped a millstone on Abimelech's head. She dropped it from the wall and when Abimelech realised he was mortally wounded by a woman, he asked his armour-bearer to kill him with his sword, to avoid the people thinking he was killed by a woman.
Strangely all this history happened at Shechem – and keep in mind that the city always portrays the Church, even with this disturbing history.
Gideon had 70 sons and the one from his concubine caused all the grief. As usual there is always a deeper underlying truth to reveal how people can be tricked into thinking that a 'leader' can have supremacy over the Church. Abimelech's scheme worked and Satan strives to do the same, wedging his way into the Church. That happened nearly 2000 years ago at Rome, and the belief is still nurtured.
Abimelech pictures any leader who desires to rule the Church. They think they can delegate the Church with their many regulations. Those Churches are built on human traditions, and no theologian except a few will dare to dispute the philosophies of human traditions handed down by the Church fathers.
Paul says: 'See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ' (Col. 2:8). We can name many Church leaders who think they can sway the people with their heresies and not the solid Word of God.
Peter warned us not to be as lords over God's heritage, but instead we need to remain modest and true to Christ's teachings.
Gideon insinuated 'his father is King' when he named Abimelech, and he never thought of himself as king but he esteemed the God of heaven.
Abimelech killed his 70 brothers, but he failed to get his hands on Jotham, who is Gideon's youngest son. He hid himself.
For the second time the 'holy people' in Gideon's family is massacred. At first they were 'men like you' (8:18) who were killed by the two kings and now it is their own son. Finally it's not the two Midianite kings but the Christians who persecuted each other. People who falsely claim to be Christians slaughtered Gideon's own family. The Koran of the Islamic people says that the greatest enemy of the Christians today are their fellow Christians. Similarly the greatest enemy of the sons of Gideon are his own sons, and similarly the greatest enemy of the bees is the wasp, and they all look alike. The 70 sons who were killed pictures the elders and they are the elders of the Church.
The men of Shechem made Abimelech their king at the famous oak at Shechem. When Jotham learned about this, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, and he lifted his voice and called out to the men of Shechem.

Jotham in Hebrew means Jehovah is perfect, and he was the only and youngest son of Gideon who escaped the horrid massacre. The name Jotham implies that besides Jehovah no one else is needed as He is perfect. Any other king in Israel will be superfluous. Jehovah is immaculate and after His resurrection He disappeared into heaven. Similarly Jotham also escaped to Beer to hide himself from Abimelech.
Remarkably Jotham was the first person in the Bible to quote a parable. Moreover that parable mentions Shechem and Gerizim, as they are referred to in the Gospels. In the Gospel of John (ch. 4) He spoke to the Samaritan woman who searched the truth. In that chapter Sychar (v. 5) is Shechem and the mountain is Mount Gerizim (v. 20). She enquired why the Jews insisted that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim Mount Gerizim to be the true place. Her ancestors worshipped God at that mountain. The visual kingdom will be at Jerusalem but the unseen kingdom will be at Mount Gerizim. The people at Jerusalem strived for a kingdom at Jerusalem, but Christ retracted as He is hidden. We are now part of a kingdom that is hidden and invisible, as Jotham who did hide himself. He is the true remnant. By all means Abimelech wanted to manifest his kingdom on earth or typologically at Rome today. Jotham wisely said there ought to be no king in Israel, and the believing remnant had to hide. He was the real son of Gideon and he never ventured to be king. Those people who long to have a king on earth will be disillusioned. The great Church spires may interest us, but they carry no weight. Jotham told them a parable and remember any parable in the Bible, whether in the Old Testament or the Gospels, portrays our hidden fifth dispensation. The reason is we can read between the lines but not the unbelievers.
Jotham shouted: One day the trees went out to anoint a king for themselves. They said to the olive tree, be our king, but the olive tree answered, ‘Should I give up my oil, by which both gods and men are honoured?’ Next the trees said to the fig tree, come and be our king. But the fig tree replied, ‘Should I give up my fruit, so good and sweet?’ Then the trees said to the vine, come and be our king. But the vine answered, ‘Should I give up my wine, which cheers both gods and men?
’Finally all the trees said to the thorn bush, ‘Come and be our king.’ The thorn bush said to the trees, ‘If you really want to anoint me king over you, come and take refuge in my shade, but if not, then let fire come out of the thorn bush and consume the cedars of Lebanon!
’Jotham reasoned that Israel were dishonoured when they made Abimelech king. They discriminated against Gideon and his family, not giving him what he deserved – even to think that his father fought for them. He risked his life to rescue them from the hand of the Midianites. Jotham was very troubled, and he grasped the real impact of the parable. In that parable the olive tree (first tree) is a type of the Messiah the anointed. The tree or the Lord Jesus refused to become king, as He had all the credentials to be one. He refused it for 2000 years.
Our Lord went into heaven to intercede for us, and He will rule but not today.
‘Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance and the ends of the earth for Your possession’ (Ps. 2:8).

During the Millennium the earth will be His possession. Our Lord refused the Kingdom and Abimelech should have known better.
In this parable the fig tree is Israel who is ‘His earthly nation’ portraying their earthly blessings. The fig tree refused as Israel was not called to be part of the visible kingdom on earth.

Abimelech

Abimelech illustrates danger of desiring visible, earthly "kings" over the Church—Christ rules invisibly now (from heaven); any human claiming dominion risks becoming a destructive "thornbush." True believers (Jotham/remnant) hide in the "fountain" (Beer/Word), awaiting full manifestation.

This warns against lording over God's heritage (1 Pet. 5:3), prioritizing traditions over Christ.

Abimelech's unfitness stems from rejecting God's sole rule, pursuing power through sin—foreshadowing why human mediation/hierarchy often fails spiritually. Christ alone is King.

Abimelech embodies the chaos of "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25)—human kingship without God leads to disaster.

Typological Interpretation

- Abimelech ("my father is king") → Usurping leaders claiming supremacy over the Church (e.g., hierarchical systems exalting human tradition over Christ). Ambition to "rule" visibly contradicts Christ's current hidden reign (High Priest in heaven).
- Shechem → The Church (visible assembly); vulnerable to infiltration by false leaders.
- Massacre of 70 brothers → Persecution of true remnant/elders by nominal "Christians" (intra-faith violence throughout history).
- Jotham ("Jehovah is perfect/complete") → True remnant/Church; hidden (like Christ ascended), proclaiming no need for earthly king—Christ alone suffices.
- Parable of Trees (first biblical parable):
    - Olive → Anointed Messiah (refuses earthly crown now).
    - Fig → Israel/natural blessings (not ruling visibly).
    - Vine → Joy/new covenant promises/Church (refuses).
    - Thornbush → Law/old creation/false rulers—offers false "shade" (shadow of law, Heb. 10:1) but brings destructive fire (curse/judgment).

The vine epitomises all the promises God made to Abraham and His Church via his Seed. The vine refused to rule and then all the trees turned to the thorn bush, thinking they can be their king. The thorn tree epitomises the old creation and with the entry of the law – 'be our king' and that clinched the old covenant of the law – the burning tree agreed to rule them.
The tree said come and live under my shadow, and again the shadow needs to alert us of the law (Heb. 10:1). Yet from the tree a fire appeared. The law can be regarded as a blessing but compared to the new covenant it is a curse. The law cast a shadow, and the Lord also appeared in the thorn bush. It was a short-lived blessing but on the long run it is regarded as a curse.
'If something came with glory that later faded away, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!' (2 Cor. 3:11).
The law was glorious but it ended in a curse. The new covenant is more glorious, and it will lift us from glory to glory.
The law is perilous, and if something does go wrong everyone in its shadow will be doomed and judged. It is like Moses approaching the burning bush.
'And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed' (Ex. 3:2–4).
The first time the thorn tree is mentioned it was burning, as typologically it is the law. The vine, fig and the olive tree convey the blessings of God, but at present they refuse to be king on earth. Their time will come and remember this is a parable. All the people who wish to place us beneath the curse of the law desire to rule the world. Many people are like Abimelech, and they end in the fire of the burning bush.
Jotham went to Beer a fountain in the midst of the desert, and it proved that our earth is no resting place. He was close to the Word of God even though his own men persecuted him. Figuratively they are keen to divert us from Christ. We need to continue standing as the 300 men with Gideon.

Judges 10 - 11

To many the story of Jephthah and his daughter will be one of the most heart-rending and perplexing stories in the Bible. The awkward question remains: did Jephthah offer a human sacrifice? Most commentators think so. It says:
'If you give me victory over the Ammonites, I will give to the Lord the first thing coming out of my house to greet me when I return in triumph. I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering.' (Judges 11:30–31)
Jephthah vowed to God that if he returned from the battle defeating his enemies, he would give to God whoever came first through the door of his house. The word 'burnt offering' (Judg. 11:31) is 'olah', and in Hebrew the word means to rise up or to ascend to God, to someone higher than himself. Jephthah's attempt may best be understood if we realise that the word 'olah' is studied in a figurative sense. The truth is that Jephthah

never slew his daughter. The discord hinges on the word ‘offering’ (Str. no. 5930). Did he slay his daughter? Literally in Hebrew the last three words read as follows:
Jehovah;
alah (to ascend);
olah (burnt offering or to ascend).
The root word for the word ‘olah’ is ‘alah’ – to ascend.
There is a double emphasis on the word ‘to rise to someone higher’.
Our dictionary defines the word ‘offering’ as: ‘to present something as an act of worship’, like our prayers. To offer does not suggest slaughter as many believe. A grain offering cannot die? We have multiple examples of offerings in the Bible and one of them is Isaac. Abraham did take Isaac to be offered to God, but he lived. In the first place, if Jephthah offered a human sacrifice, he did something that was strictly forbidden by the Mosaic laws and it was hideous to God (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5; Deut. 12:31; 18:10). It would be a bit bizarre for Jephthah to think that he could elicit God’s favour in battle by promising to offer a human sacrifice to Him, that is, to do something in violation of God’s wishes.
Hannah made a similar sacrifice when she gave her son to Eli for God, for the remainder of his life (1 Sam. 1:11). We need to dedicate our bodies to Christ as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1) and until now we live! If by any chance his dog, sheep or cattle did meet him first, he would have offered them. Remember at that time they usually sheltered in their homes, but instead he did meet his only daughter. Jephthah’s daughter was sacrificed differently.
Jephthah’s daughter was offered, and she lived. The last verse of this chapter says that year after year the daughters of Israel went to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite for four days each year. It is only possible if she was alive, as this tradition would have ended once she died.
It is best not to make a vow as the Lord will require it of that person.
‘When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the Lord your God surely will require it of you, and it would be a sin to you.’ (Deut. 23:21)
Jephthah in Hebrew means ‘to open’ and he is a type of Christ. When Christ opens the door of the new covenant, none will shut it. He will open the graves (Ezek. 37:12). He who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut them (Rev. 3:7). Jephthah is called in Hebrews 11 as one of the warriors of faith.
My conclusion is that all the typology in the Old Testament conveys the truths relating to our dispensation. The truths found in the New Testament, as in the Book of Ephesians, relate to truths already captured in the Old Testament, and we have the Spirit of God to detail them to us. He will lead us to all the truths (John 16:13) and the following chapter says that the Word of God is the truth (John 17:17). To be established in the present truth (2 Pet. 1:12) is to acquaint ourselves with the truths hidden in the Old Testament typology. Figuratively we will find Christ or the Church in each page of the Old Testament.

Jephthah was the son of Gilead, and at Gilead Laban met Jacob with his daughters. Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead and among them Jephthah was one of their descendants. Yet again we have a descendant and a warrior from Joseph, as Manasseh was the firstborn child of Joseph. Jephthah was the child of a harlot, and his brothers made life difficult for him. His brothers who were the sons of Gilead's wife drove Jephthah out to prevent him from sharing their inheritance. Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob. Soon he had a large band of rebels who followed him.

After many days when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. The previous chapter says that for 18 years they made war with the Israelites. They begged him to return as their commander, so they could fight the Ammonites. Jephthah said to them, 'Didn't you hate me and drive me from my father's house? Why do you come to me today when you are troubled?' In the end they agreed that if he returned to be their commander, he would be given his promised inheritance. Twice he was reassured and then they made him their commander. Even though he had a group of worthless men, he had faith in God. Previously Jephthah was disputed by his brothers and they refused to give him his allotted inheritance. Yet later they returned to him to be their commander.

Many times this train of thought is found in the Old Testament. Jephthah was abandoned by his brothers and in the end he was endowed with the firstborn rights. Our Lord Jesus was also abandoned by His brothers. He once said:

'A prophet is honoured everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family.' (Mark 6:4)

Yet again after 2000 years, during the time of 'Jacob's trouble' (Jer. 30:7) they will call on Him and He will deliver them from their anguish. On the day of the Lord when the Lord will deliver Israel, maybe the self-same words of Jephthah may be repeated once more when they are troubled: 'Didn't you hate me and drive me from my father's house? Why do you come to me now when you're in trouble?' Before Jacob received his firstborn right he had to escape for 20 years from Esau before he befriended him again. The 20 years Jacob spent with Laban epitomises our dispensation. Similarly Joseph, who was endowed with the firstborn right, did suffer and he was sold as a slave in Egypt. His brothers were jealous and told Jacob their father that he died. Joseph went to a good land – and I will not be surprised if he too went to the land of Tob – 'the good land'. Then later in a panic his brothers had to buy bread due to a great drought. At first they did not recognise him, but later they did. He was rejected but in the end he became their redeemer.

Jeroboam also fled into Egypt and remained there until the death of Solomon. He returned as the commander of the 10 tribes of Israel.

When Moses belonged to the family of Pharaoh, he noticed that one of the Israelites was being abused by an Egyptian, so he went to his defence and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. Moses thought that his own people would recognise him as their redeemer from slavery; he would rescue them, but they did not accept him as such. The next day Moses found two

Israelites fighting. He tried to reconcile them, and they pushed Moses aside and said, ‘Who made you ruler and judge over us?’ (Acts 7:20–28). Moses would have redeemed his people but instead he had to escape to a foreign country. He continued living there for 40 years before he returned to Egypt as their redeemer. Stephen, who was brought before the Sanhedrin, accused the religious leaders of his time. He told them that they too reject their Redeemer saying:
‘Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute?’ (Acts 7:52).
They did reject Jesus and later He will redeem them.
David also fled with idle men and had to hide in the caves. After Saul’s death he returned to become their leader. All of them epitomise the 5th dispensation or our time of waiting, when our Lord will redeem the world.
Throughout the Old Testament we will discover that certain truths do repeat themselves time and again. The most common example is that the emphasis is not on the first but with the second, as the ‘second’ will inherit the firstborn right. It is not Lot but Abraham; not Esau but Jacob; not Leah but Rachel. The complete history of Esther revolves around three meals. They were different settings, and yet they conveyed simple truths that concern our dispensation. When Israel fled from Egypt they thought they would enter the Promised Land once they crossed the final hurdle or the Red Sea. 40 years later they again crossed the River Jordan but they did not enter the promised rest. Jephthah had a discord with his brothers, but now Jephthah has another discord with the ‘other family’ or the other brothers. Lot and Abraham shared the same family, yet Abraham was the firstborn. Lot had two sons and from them stemmed the Ammonites and the Moabites. In Hebrew the word Lot means a covering. He epitomises Israel living under the law, as this is likened to a covering (Isa. 25:7).
History continually repeats itself from a different angle. The battle between Saul and David is similar to the times of Jephthah. Saul and Lot (Amorites) picture the law, but David and Jephthah the new covenant and our present dispensation.
Jephthah was a true politician, and his first tactic was to prevent a war. He recounted to the Ammonites a historic event 300 years ago between Israel and them. Jephthah sent messengers to the king of Ammon, asking him why he was waging war against Israel. The children of Ammon answered, ‘Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt; now therefore restore those lands peaceably.’ Jephthah replied saying, ‘Israel did not take the land of Moab or the land of the children of Ammon. But when Israel came up from Egypt, then Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, asking them to let them pass through their land, but their king refused. In the end they dared to wage war against Israel and they lost and Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites. He told them blatantly that the God of Israel gave them the land, and likewise they too needed to converse with their own gods to return the land to them.
Jephthah’s arguments were that Israel conquered the land, and they possessed the cities around the River Arnon for 300 years.
The Lord was the One who gave the land to them.
No attempt was made until then to recover the land.

The disputed land did not belong to the Ammonites, but to the Amorites. Lot and his descendants embody the law, but they also represent the Amorites. From a different angle the Amorites (speakers) represent the principalities, the powers or the rulers of the darkness. Apparently the Amorites were the foremost nation in the land of Canaan, and they were mentioned early in Scripture (Gen. 10). God cursed them (Gen. 15:16) as they depict Satan and his fallen angels. They encourage the people to speak the lie. Satan is the father of all lies and the Amorites are allied to him. Satan being the liar from the beginning spoiled the old creation. The demons that emanated from the previously fallen world do incite the Amorites.

Those living under the law (Lot and his descendants) or the Amorites are trapped by Satan. The Bible says that the religious leaders that were steeped in the laws were inspired by the devil, their father (John 8:44). The battle Jephthah fought had a far greater implication than we think, and it is similar to the battle between David and Goliath.

Element	OT Symbol	NT/Church-Age Fulfilment	Our Dispensation Tie-In
Jephthah ("Opener")	Harlot's son, rejected by brothers; flees to Tob ("good land"); leads "worthless men"; vows for victory; opens way vs. Ammon/Amorites.	Christ (Heb. 11:32 faith-warrior): "Opens" graves (Ezek. 37:12), new covenant door (Rev. 3:7; no shut); rejected by kin (John 1:11), exalted post-humiliation.	We (outcasts) join His "worthless" band (1 Cor. 1:27–28); negotiate inheritance via faith (Gal. 3:29). His diplomatic history-recount = gospel's unassailable truth (land God's gift, not conquest).
Ammonites/ Amorites (Foes)	Ammon (Lot/law-covering, 18-year oppression); Amor (speakers/lies, Satan's cursed angels, Gen. 10/15).	Law's curse (Col. 2:14 handwriting); principalities (Eph. 6:12; Satan father of lies, John 8:44).	Our battle: Not flesh, but disarmed powers (Col. 2:15)—law/ordinances nailed at cross. "300 years" = unchallenged gospel rest (Heb. 4:9–10).
House/Mizpah Return	Home at Mizpah ("watchtower"); daughter first greeter post-victory.	Christ's ascension post-resurrection (Heb. 1:3; purges sins, sits as Priest). Abraham meets Melchizedek (bread/wine) post-Sodom battle (Gen. 14:18).	Church = God's household (Eph. 2:19; Gal. 6:10). We, firstfruits/body (Eph. 5:30; 1 Cor. 15:23), greet risen Lord—like Eve from Adam's "deep sleep" rib (Gen. 2:21–23; one flesh, yet next-gen "daughter").
Daughter (Only/Firstborn)	Sole child; dances out; agrees to vow; 2 months mountains bewailing virginity; lifelong "offering" (celibate service); annually celebrated.	Church: Christ's "only" body (John 3:16 parallel; Eph. 5:30 flesh/bones); planted in His death/resurrection likeness (Rom. 6:5). Sanctified by His body-offering (Heb. 10:10).	Virginity = undefiled Bride (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 14:4); we "ascend" as living praise (Heb. 13:15; Ps. 22:25 vows). Companions = fellow believers (Heb. 13:13 outside camp).
Vow & "Offering" (Olah)	Ascend to Lord (not slay; double "alah" emphasis); implicates daughter; fulfilled in service, not death.	Christ's self-offering (Heb. 9:14 eternal Spirit; 10:10 body once-for-all). Vows in Psalms (22:25; 61:8; 66:13; Jonah 2:9 thanksgiving).	No rash vows (Eccl. 5:4–5); we present bodies alive (Rom. 12:1). Spirit guides to these truths (John 16:13; 17:17; 2 Pet. 1:12)—OT hides Christ/Church everywhere.
2 Months	Isolation with friends; bewails	2,000-year Church age (2 months = dual witness/dispensation); mountains = heavenly	Our "outside camp" wait (Heb. 13:13 reproach); companions = Body-life. Ends in rapture

Jephthah warred against them, and he portrays the One who will ‘open’ the way and lead them to the promises of the new covenant. Our Lord disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them (Col. 2:15). We share in this victory and similarly the daughter of Jephthah will also share in this great victory. The victory involved the Ammonites (the law or the handwriting of the ordinances that were against us) (Col. 2:14) and the Amorites (the evil principalities and powers in heaven).

When Jephthah returned from the battle, he went to his home at Mizpah, and then his daughter was the first to meet him. We have a similar history when Abraham returned from battle after fighting the kings at Sodom, the city where Lot used to live, portraying the law. Upon Abraham’s return from battle he did meet Melchizedek

. ‘As Abram returned from his victory . . . Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High, brought him bread and wine.’ (Gen. 14:18)

Figuratively it portrays the time when Christ returned to heaven after purging our sins.

‘After he had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.’ (Heb. 1:3)

He sat down as our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Our dispensation portrays what happened to Christ after His death and resurrection. When Jephthah returned from the battle it pictured the victory Christ obtained by His resurrection from the dead.

The next question is who is the house? We as the Church are the house.

‘Now therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.’ (Eph. 2:19)

We belong to the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).

The emphasis is that she was Jephthah’s only daughter – being the firstborn. We find a similar Hebrew word ‘only’ (Str. no. 3173) when Abraham offered his only son Isaac.

The first to visit the resurrected Christ after His victory over death was the Church. ‘We are His body. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones’ (Eph. 5:30) and we share a similar household.

Between us and Christ we have a man–woman relationship even though we are one body with Him. We can be likened to Adam and Eve, who share the same body or rib. When Adam was caught in a deep sleep he awoke with Eve on his side. We tend to think she is his wife, but Eve could also be his daughter, as she is the next generation.

Each Scripture in the Old Testament that pictures Christ as the resurrected does also concern the Church. We are one plant with Him.

‘For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.’ (Rom. 6:5)

The daughter of Jephthah agreed with the oath her father made.

‘My father,’ she replied, ‘you have given your word to the Lord. Do to me just as you promised.’ (Judg. 11:36)

Certainly our Lord also made an oath or promise to God, and we wish Him to pursue it.

When Christ ascended from the dead He was equipped to become our High Priest, but not in tune with the old priesthood of Aaron. He became our High Priest when He offered Himself.
‘How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.’ (Heb. 9:14)
He offered Himself after His death at Golgotha, and as the resurrected He was equipped to make this final offering. The blood of Christ is the life of the new covenant. His death was vital to end the domain of the law, and He did not offer His old body as part of the old covenant.
He offered what He promised, and that is His resurrected body.
‘By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.’ (Heb. 10:10)
With this offering we are sanctified with Him and we need to reach a decision with this great redemption. We are now seated with Christ in heaven.
‘And He raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.’ (Eph. 2:6)
Our place is in heaven with Christ, and similarly I believe that Jephthah’s daughter had a similar calling to serve God at the tabernacle. She used to live outside the borders of Israel, but now she is blessed. The promises Jephthah made to God did implicate other people, e. g. his daughter; and similarly the promises Christ made to God will involve the Church. Eve that was born from Adam, and she is one flesh with Adam, picturing the Church. Similarly in this chapter the daughter who was the ‘only’ or firstborn of Jephthah could also symbolise the Church. As Christ offered His body we too need to offer our own bodies (Heb. 10:10).
‘Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming His name.’ (Heb. 13:15)
Our Lord made a vow, and that is pictured in the Church. In many of the Psalms this vow is mentioned.
‘My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.’ (Ps. 22:25)
‘So will I sing praise unto Thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.’ (Ps. 61:8)
‘I will go into Thy house with burnt offerings; I will pay Thee my vows.’ (Ps. 66:13)
We as part of the Church are presented to God as a burnt offering.
‘But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.’ (Jonah 2:9)
Our Lord made the vow with all its consequences.
The two months the daughter of Jephthah spent in isolation on the mountains portray our present dispensation.
‘She said to her father, “Let this thing be done for me; let me alone two months, that I may go up and down on the mountains and bewail my virginity, I and my companions.”’ (Judg. 11:37)
When she did shelter in the mountains she had people to accompany her. This is easy to picture as the Church is also pictured ‘without the camp’ bearing His reproach (Heb. 13:13). She hid herself with her friends or close family, and they were the companions, portraying the Church of today.

Our Lord often secluded Himself when He went into the mountains, and similarly Moses was hidden from Israel for 40 days. The two months epitomise our present dispensation lasting 2000 years. Similarly, Joseph was jailed for two years before being exalted by Pharaoh.
After the two-month period she was exalted, picturing the end of our dispensation or the rapture. Even though she was exalted at the tabernacle, other women visited her four days a year. She was born in the land of Tob but later did service in the most holy place.
Similarly, we will be glorified in His temple or the heavens, and the world will picture us as part of Christ

Judges 13-16
Samson

Many Christians do reflect on Samson with great scepticism, thinking he had strong muscles but a weak moral character. He was weak when he chased women, but proved to be a bold warrior. He never seemed to learn from his previous mistakes and finally succumbed to his greatest weakness, namely women. Many believe he is not fit to be called a judge, but in the Book of Hebrews he is mentioned as one of the great champions of faith.
'And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets.' Heb. 11:32If we are inclined to study Samson from a moral perspective, we will be baffled. His life experiences have a far greater typological repercussion.
In the Book of Numbers chapter 6 we can study the duties of a Nazarite and according to the Old Testament he was the only real Nazarite. Samson was tied by the Nazarite vow. :

- Throughout the time of his vow, he was not allowed to have a haircut. He is respected as holy and set apart.
- He was forbidden to get close to any dead body, even when his own father, mother, brother or sister died.
- He should not defile the hair on his head, because it is the symbol of his separation to God.
- Any Nazarite was not allowed to eat the fruit from the vine as the alcohol epitomises the new life, not even the grape seeds or their skins.
- As long as the promises of the Nazarite were pending he was not allowed to be in contact with anything that embodies life (alcohol) or death.
- The life of any Nazarite seems to be monotonous, not experiencing our constant ebb and flow between life and death.
- He portrays the eternal, as the eternal cannot be confined by either life or death.
- The hair on our heads portrays the power he has and if that is clipped, he will lose his power. A Nazarite did not die or lose any of his power and everything remained as it was – as long as the promises are sustained he is deemed holy by our Lord.

How long those promises lasted is not mentioned.

Whenever he is defiled because someone suddenly died beside him, he had to wait for seven days and then he had to shave his head. On the 8th day, he had to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest. Then as before, he had to make a new vow to the Lord. No one was asked to be a Nazarite, and making such a vow had great penalties, and personally I reckon it foolish. No one in the Bible was ever a Nazarite except Samson. Samuel was not a Nazarite, even if their backgrounds were very similar. Both were born from barren women, and that made Samuel no Nazarite. Samson's mother made the promises even before he was born.

The Lord once said:

'Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.' Ex. 13:2

Hannah, the mother of Samuel, did not know how to perform the promise she made, as she only wanted to give the child to the Lord, or what belonged to Him. In the history of Samuel, even Eli was taken by surprise, and he told Hannah to return later with Samuel. That was not common practice. Similarly, Samson's parents did dedicate him as the firstborn to the Lord, an exception as it was arranged before his birth.

Samson epitomises the Lord Jesus, and the promise of a Nazarite was to God, even before His birth on earth. Similarly, our Lord fulfilled a promise made before He was born. Our Lord and Samson had to defend a vow that was made even before their birth.

Our Lord Jesus was a true Nazarite, and He was dedicated to God in heaven. He made a promise and spiritually that is true, but not physically. In a spiritual sense, He once said He would not drink the fruit of the vine, as He was a true Nazarite.

'For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' Luke 22:18

A Nazarite is someone who made a promise as written in Numbers 6, and also a person who lives at Nazareth. Between the two, there is a vast difference. Sixteen times our Lord is portrayed as the 'One' coming from Nazareth. If it says that our Lord is from Nazareth, it also implies that He is a Nazarite. He did drink wine and strictly speaking, He was no Nazarite. Samson epitomised the Lord Jesus on earth. Now the Christians find the concept of a Nazarite too difficult to grasp, and similarly the history of Samson portraying the life of our Lord Jesus. Neither do the people understand Solomon when he wrote that 'everything under the sun is meaningless, like the chasing of the wind.' Ecc. 1:14

They think he was cynical when he wandered away from God, asserting that everything on earth is worthless. The general Christian belief today is we need to develop our full potential, unlike Solomon, who had no positive thinking. Everything beneath the sun or the earth is vain but not the things above the sun (heaven) as there we can acquaint ourselves with the fullness of God. Solomon had a great understanding of the earth and heaven, and he constantly weighed the one against the other. If we understand the Lord Jesus, we too will grasp the meaning of Samson.

The immense power Samson had is likened to the power our Lord had before He was born on earth. Our Lord Jesus was God, who expressed

Himself in sinful flesh like us. He became man, but His power was limitless, and Samson vividly portrays that.
He was a human being like us, but he had abilities that exceeded ours. It was promised to him before he was born and figuratively speaking it is compared to the power Jehovah had before the Lord Jesus was born on earth.
‘Then I said, "Behold, I have come – in the volume of the book it is written of Me – to do Your will, O God. "’ Heb. 10:7
The promises our Lord Jesus made were written on a scroll – long before He was born at Bethlehem. Since His birth, He memorised the Word of God and He fulfilled all the promises made in it, and the life of Samson illustrates this.
There are many simple truths in the Book of Judges, and we will discover that certain truths will continually surface. If we fail to appreciate the typological character of the Bible, we will remain perplexed. History continually repeats itself and the greatest theme of the Bible is to reflect Christ leading to our dispensation of grace. An example is the Book of Esther that progresses by the preparing of three meals, but unknowingly to many Christians, the meals do portray the truths pertaining to Christ and His Church. In the Book of Judges, each judge was different and yet their lives shared the same message. Similarly, the four Gospels of our Lord differ but their message is the same.
The children of Israel did what was wrong and therefore the Lord delivered them to the Philistines. They were burdened for 40 years. The 40 years reminds us of the 40 years Israel did sojourn in the wilderness and the great tribulation.
God did intervene, and He called a man named Manoah from the tribe of Dan, who lived in the town of Zorah. The word can be translated as a hornet or a wasp, and that is interesting as later in Samson’s history, honey is again mentioned. The wasps are the bee’s natural enemies, and once they enter the hive, the bees are easily overpowered by the wasp. That can be compared to the enmity between Jacob and Esau or Ishmael and Isaac. They both share the same father Abraham, but the one is endowed with the Word of God (bee) and the other or the wasp is not the true seed – even if they do look alike. Zorah also relates to the word leprosy and as the bee depicts Israel, we are leprous and portray the decaying nature of sin, and our natural enemy is the wasp who continually plagues us. Zorah expresses the enemy and the sin Israel had to endure. From that hostile place, someone is called to help them, and he was from the family of Dan. He involved himself with our wicked world of sin, as our Lord who did die for our sins; to rescue us from the evil world we now live in. Gal. 1:4
Many a time we read of the redeemer who comes from the adversary. In the Book of Philippians ch. 2 we read how God became flesh to be like one of us. He had a body like ours, and He had no sin, and by having a body like ours, He could procure a ransom for us. He burdened Himself with the curse of the wasp, the leprosy or sin and He will create a new world without sin. That same Lord created Adam, and he took the blame and delivered us from any sin. He became man, and He paid the ransom for

us. The redeemer as in the Book of Ruth is the closest family, or the one who created us. Our closest relative is both our Maker and Redeemer. Our Lord engrossed Himself with the wrongs of our world and its chaos. The man from Zorah is none other than God Himself, and He ventured to redeem us. That same God who recreated our previous fallen earth and shaped Adam from the dust of our world; redeemed us and He took the punishment of all our sins. The closest kinsman or the redeemer to help us is our Lord. The history of Boaz and Ruth do portray it.
Samson's father is called Manoah and figuratively speaking he is God who involved himself with the 'Zorah' or the appalling circumstances of our world, stained by leprosy and sin. He went along with the creation whether it is the old or the new creation.
He had a wife, and she was barren – and the wife of God is Israel. Every woman is reckoned as barren having no child, but once she conceives with the involvement of a man, she will have a child. That is similar to our creation that was barren and void without God. God took the initiative to recreate our world and to create Adam.
All the barren women of the Old Testament relate to Mary the mother of Jesus. She could not procure life, but she did as God involved Himself with us. Similarly, the births of Isaac, Samuel and Samson were all born from previous infertile women. It has a similar typological perspective, as God involved Himself with us and our world needed Him to procure life.
Manoah was from the tribe of Dan and in the Hebrew it is known as 'a judge.' The tribe of Dan lived in the north, and he was the 5th son of Jacob.
'Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider shall fall backward.' Gen. 49:17 And of Dan he said:
'Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan.' Deut. 33:22
The obvious question is who is the serpent and the lion? We need to think clearly as both are the kings of our earth – both the lion with his mane and the snake can be regarded as the kings of the earth or the dust. Christ and not Satan is the king as the Lion is the king of the animal world and the snakes are hailed as the king of the soil. The tribe of Dan is the Church as we are in the north or in heaven with Christ. In the Old Testament, the tribe of Dan is nearly always related to the tribe of Ephraim, and they are the firstborn or the Church, and similarly Dan.
In Hebrew Samson's father who is called Manoah, means 'to rest' or quietness. His son Samson will fight the battle, and he will be victorious. Jehovah in heaven epitomises Manoah, and He hides himself and He will reveal Himself via Samson. Typologically speaking Manoah is Jehovah, the barren woman is Israel and Samson is the Lord Jesus.
An angel appeared to the woman, and this history is very similar to the time when the angel appeared to both Mary and then Joseph in the New Testament. The Word of God is given, and whenever in the Bible an angel appeared to a woman, it concerns the appearance of the Messiah on earth. The son is the Messiah. Here the principles of the Nazarite are set down and it involves the woman who is pregnant. Samson will be a Nazarite from the time he is inside her womb, and he will deliver the

Israelites from the Philistines. They told her not to drink wine and then the principles of the Nazarite were set on her until Samson is born.
Samson will deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and we may question who will end their final liberation from the Philistine people? It is the son of David as his kingship portrays the Millennium. In contrast, Samson portrays our Lord's first coming to earth. Samson did begin to deliver Israel, and he epitomises the Lord in His humiliation. Samson never delivered Israel entirely from the Philistines as they penetrated their borders.
'And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him while he was in Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.' Samson's history commenced between Zorah and Eshtaol. It says that those cities are positioned between Dan and Judah or the Church (Dan) and Judaism (Judah). It lies between the borders of old and the new covenant. The whole history of Samson is marred by the two,

or the dualistic nature of our world. I will name a few examples: ■ To Menoah's wife the angel of Jehovah appeared twice
■ He did tear the lion between the bottom and upper jaw,
■ He tore a buck in two,
■ He went twice to Timnath for his wedding,
■ There were two pairs of 30 clothing;
■ He had two puzzles,
■ He tied two jackals to one another;
■ He was tied with 2 new pairs of robes;
■ There was a valley gushing much water and valley is fixed between two hills our mountains,
■ The 2 eyes were plucked from his orbit.
■ Samson was tied with 2 copper chains.
■ He was tied to two mill stones,
■ He grasped the 2 pillars with his two 2 hands.

We may question why the two? The second epitomises the firstborn or the one who will accomplish the redemption.
Our Lord appeared once, and he will return to our world; the first was with regards to our redemption, and the second is yet future. Christ redeemed the world with His first coming, but with His return, He will judge the world. The two stamped Samson's life as he commenced the battle with no final deliverance.
He will be given in marriage, but there was no true unity between the two. The marriage seemed right but in the end it failed. The Lord Jesus came unto his own, but they did not accept him. John 1:11 The Lord wanted to commence His kingdom on earth, but it was delayed.
The name Samson derives from the Hebrew word 'shemesh,' meaning sun, and he is named 'the man of the sun.' Shem denotes the double nature of his name, or it could also be a tooth, or year, and the word 'esh' is the sun. Our teeth (with the bottom and upper jaw) or our years (seasons) are also branded by the two, and similarly the name Samson. It echoes the dual nature of his name as his life on earth portrayed our Lord's first coming to earth, and not His second return to earth.

The angel appeared to Manoah, but he was unaware he spoke to an angel of the Lord. Manoah thought the angel was a man. v. 10 His wife told Manoah that the man who appeared to her the other day is here again! Manoah asked the man if he was the man who talked to his wife the other day? Yes, he replied. Manoah begged him to stay for a meal. He wanted to prepare a young goat for him to eat. The angel agreed to stay, but he told him he will not eat anything. However, he may prepare a burnt offering as a sacrifice to the Lord. Then Manoah asked the angel, what is your name? If all your sayings are true, then we want to honour you. Why do you ask my name? – the angel of the Lord replied. You wouldn't understand even when I tell you.

Then Manoah took a young goat and a grain offering and offered it on a rock as a sacrifice to the Lord. As Manoah and his wife watched, the Lord astonished them. As the flames from the altar shot up towards the sky, the angel of the Lord ascended to heaven in the column of smoke. When Manoah and his wife saw that, they fell with their faces to the ground. The angel did not appear again to Manoah and his wife.

Manoah finally realised it was the angel of the Lord, and he said to his wife, ‘we will die, for we have seen God!’ His wife knew better and said if the Lord wanted to kill us, He wouldn't have accepted our burnt offering and grain offering.

As with Abraham, they knew how to ascertain whether the angel was Jehovah Himself. They prepared Him a meal and the fire from the rock consumed it. In the Hebrew language, we find no capital letters and similarly the angel mentioned in that chapter had no capital letters. We can conclude it is God Himself. Wisely some of the translators of the Bible did use capital letters.

The whole rock is an altar and the flame went into heaven, being a sweet-smelling offering to God. Samson was blessed, and we did mention that his home town was between Zorah and Eshtaol. Later he was buried at the same place. We are familiar with the name Zorah but in Hebrew the word Eshtaol is an entreaty, an earnest request or petition. At the place of the wasp and the leprosy (Zorah), we can anticipate the fruit of the vine. We long for the redemption that will commence between Zorah and Eshtaol. They sense the victory, but they will not be delivered totally. We as Samson are fixed between the enemy and our freedom. Similarly, Christ's first coming is wedged between the old and the new creation, similarly to the Church today.

One day when Samson was in Timnah, he noticed a certain Philistine woman. When he returned home, he told his parents I want to marry a young Philistine woman I saw at Timnah. His parents objected and said isn’t there any better woman from our own tribe or any from amongst the other tribes of Israel. Wouldn’t you rather marry them? Why do you have to go to the pagan Philistine people to find a wife? Samson only begged his father, get her for me. She is the one I want. His parents didn't realise the Lord was at work in this, creating an opportunity to disrupt the Philistines, who ruled over Israel at that time.

Timnah means ‘an assigned part’ as if it is sold to someone. The part or the share Samson desired from the world is from the Philistine woman or

the old man. Samson portrays the rights Jehovah had before He created our world, but He forfeited everything. The woman is not only Israel, but also the entire old creation that belongs to God. It’s endowed to Him, but something went awfully wrong. His parents were puzzled as to his taste, but Samson persistently chose her from amongst all the other women. Samson did not regard his parents’ advice as she caught his eyes. There are many fishes in the water and why do you choose a Philistine woman? Similarly, today we may ask why our Lord chose Israel.

The Philistine people or else the people from Canaan, Cain, Esau and Ishmael portray the unbelieving Israelites. The land of Israel needed redemption and it will be procured by a marriage. His father went in accord with his plans, and as the Israelites were not blameless, similarly the Philistines had no good report. We may question what made God choose Israel? God defined His flawed marriage with Israel in Ezekiel 16, and clearly everything went wrong.

Samson did not plan this marriage, but the Lord did seek an opportune moment to disrupt the Philistine people. The Lord looked for an occasion as they did rule Israel for 40 years, and to overthrow them, God chose Samson. Similarly, God chose the Lord Jesus to fight the old man.

As Samson and his parents journeyed down to Timnah, a young lion attacked Samson close to the vineyards. At that moment, the Spirit of the Lord took control of him, and he ripped the lion's jaws apart with his bare hands. He did it so easily as if it was a young goat. Samson kept the experience to himself, and his parents were unaware of it. Samson walked close to the vineyards and he was not allowed to touch them. He refrained from drinking its fruit or even to chew its leaves or bark. The fruit or its wine portrays the new life and also the young lion. The roaring young lion is the voice of the risen Christ.

The wine relates to the resurrected Christ. What happened here is that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him – and that was not Samson’s doing. He tore the lion as if it was a kid, and to slay a kid portrays the offering of the Lord Jesus at Calvary. Typologically speaking we can argue whatever happened to the goat or kid, reflects what happened to the lion. There is a bond between the kid and the lion. In the Book of Revelation, both of them are mentioned.

‘Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. . . . . Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain.”’ Rev. 5:5,6The goat is the Lamb. The Lamb was slaughtered, but He is alive today. It stood as if it was slain; figuratively it portrays the scars our Lord was afflicted with at Calvary. He was torn but behold He is alive today.

Samson tore the lion with his bare hands. The roaring lion is torn and dead and the pending Kingdom of Christ, which seemed so promising at His birth got deferred.

The promises that are equated to the new covenant e. g. the wine and its blessings, is delayed and the world today do not share its blessings.

The Kingdom of Christ ended abruptly, and now there is a great interlude until His final return to earth. When He returns He will be the roaring or

the speaking lion. The lion is torn but after a long interval of 2000 years, the world will enjoy the ‘fruit’ from the lion’s carcass.
When Samson reached Timnah, he talked with the woman, and he was pleased with her. Samson returned later to Timnah to marry his wife, and again he veered off the path to look at the carcass of the lion. He found that a swarm of bees had settled in its carcass, and he found honey. He scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate it along the way. He also shared it with his parents, and they too enjoyed it. But he didn't tell them he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.
Samson went to get married, and he again took some of the honey. That is a miracle and a puzzle. It conveys the hidden things mysterious to Israel, but to the Church they are obvious.
Why did Samson think of a puzzle? It’s to stress our time of waiting, a time no one reckons with.
There was a festival but the marriage did not develop.
What happened in the meantime? It remained a riddle centred on the significance of honey from the torn lion. Samson as Jonathan took some the honey and there were eyes brightened. Jonathan tasted a little of the honey, after he won a great battle. 1 Sam. 14:29
Samson gave some of the honey to his parents, and this long chapter is centred on one big mystery. The reason is they too were ignorant of the lion and the honey in its carcass.
Now Samson’s father went down to see a woman and to prepare a festival there, as that was customary for the bridegrooms. Thirty young men from the town were invited to be his companions, and Samson told them a riddle. If they can solve the riddle in 7 days of the celebration, then he will give them 30 linen garments and 30 changes of clothing, and if they can’t, then they need to give it to him.
Any puzzle in the Bible communicates the truths concerning our dispensation of grace. The puzzle is regarding the wedding between the Lord and Israel, but that the wedding failed. The puzzles were debatable.
Samson told them the riddle:
From the one who eats came something to eat; out of the strong came something sweet. For three days they struggled to solve the puzzle, but they had no clue.
That riddle hinges around the meaning of the 3 days – or what happened on the 3rd day – the day when Christ rose from the dead.
On the 4th day, they said to Samson's wife, give us the answer to the riddle from your husband, or we will burn down your father's house with you in it. Did you invite us to that marriage just to make us poor? They continued; now you want to steal our clothes, as this riddle is too complex? Samson's future wife came to him in tears and told him, ‘you don't love me; you hate me!’ you have given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer. Samson told her it remains a secret, and he did not even tell his parents, why he should tell her. So she cried whenever she was with him and continued crying throughout the 7 days of celebration. At last, on the seventh day, he told her the answer because of her persistent nagging. The climax was on the 7th day and she told the young men.

So before sunset on the seventh day, the men of the town went to Samson with their answer: What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion? They knew the answer.
The sweetness came from the strong and Samson replied, ‘if you did not plough with my heifer, you would not have found the answer to my riddle! ’In real life it is questionable if you would find the honey in the lion’s mouth, but here it does and why is it possible? The honey usually comes from the bee and in Hebrew the word honey is related to the word ‘Dabar’ or the Word of God. Honey portrays the truths concerning the Word of God. Honey is a solid food, unlike milk. 1 Cor. 3:2 The lion is the strong one and what is stronger than the Word of God? Both the lion and the bee do picture the Word of God and they are the spiritual blessings we are blessed with.
Any riddle in the Bible will be easy for us if we convey the truths to our 5th dispensation. Samson told them if they had not ploughed with my heifer (listened to my wife) they would not have found the answer to his riddle. Then the Spirit of the Lord took control of him he went down to the town of Ashkelon, and he killed thirty men. He took their belongings, and gave their clothing to the men who did answer his riddle.
Ashkelon is one of the five Philistine cities, and there he killed the 30 men to get their 30 robes, the ones he promised to the men who answered his riddle. We may ask who won at the end of the day, as the clothes were worn by the slain Philistines.
The following question is why did he go to Ashkelon? In Hebrew, the city means sha-kal meaning to weigh or to find a point of balance between the left and right. The primary idea is to seek a balance between the two weights. It can also mean an interruption or an interlude. At Ashkelon, we find the interlude between the two, or the balance between Christ first and second coming to earth. That is the puzzle as it entails the break in God’s plan of salvation. Our dispensation is wedged in that interval. The stability is our 5th dispensation, and its strength is to speak the truth and to do justice. We are familiar with the picture of the ‘goddess of justice’ holding her scales and sword. The woman with the scales answered them blindfolded to help her in making a good judgment. She has the sword to procure justice. There is great anticipation with her verdict, and similarly Samson will judge the people appropriately. Samson did justice to commence his ruling at Ashkelon.
Samson was furious about what happened at the wedding, and he decided to return and live with his parents. So his wife was given in marriage to another man who was Samson's best man at the wedding.
Samson, who returned to his family, can be likened to Christ who after His resurrection, went back to God in heaven. We may question whether the marriage is procured between Samson and the woman or the Lord Jesus and the Jewish nation. The marriage ended with a discord, and that depicts our 5th dispensation of waiting. The woman became the companion of another person, meaning that once Israel rejected the resurrected Christ, they obeyed ‘another man’ or Satan. We may argue if Christ's Kingdom did commence on earth, but obviously it didn’t.

Afterward, during the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat, and he went down to visit his wife. He told his parents he is going to his wife's room. When he arrived at her father's home, her dad refused him entry into the house thinking that Samson abandoned his daughter. He deemed it appropriate to give her to the best man at the wedding. He told Samson isn't her younger sister more attractive? Take her instead.
Samson was very hurt, and he told them this time I have the freedom to get even with the Philistines, and I will really harm them.
Samson, who was keen to commune with his rightful wife felt saddened and rejected when her dad gave her to another man. Their marriage was annulled.
In the New Testament, we have a very similar setting when there is talk of a marriage, but it never happened.
‘He who has the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore that joy of mine is fulfilled.’ Jn. 3:29 Without a doubt in this verse, our Lord is the bridegroom and John the Baptist is the friend of the bridegroom, who rejoiced when he heard Him speak. Our Lord did come to the earth as the Bridegroom, and Israel would have been the bride. John the Baptist was not the promised
‘bridegroom’ as it was our Lord and bear in mind John the Baptist was from the tribe of Levi, and our Lord from the tribe of Judah.
The Bible says that both John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus were family, but it is difficult to know how. There were great expectations when the Bridegroom (Lord Jesus) appeared as a marriage would have been settled between Him and the bride, Israel. Sadly that ended with the bride being unfaithful to the Bridegroom. She (Israel) left Him for another man (Satan). There is rivalry between the Lord and Satan, and Israel ended by being faithful to ‘the other.’ They are now enslaved to Satan, who wishes to claim the throne of God. In the previous chapter John 2 there was a marriage and the water was turned into wine. The atmosphere was idyllic, and peace would have pursued, with the Lord in their midst. After the proposed marriage in John 2, and the mentioning of the Bridegroom in chapter 3, a harvest would have followed in chapter 4.
Do you not say or is there no saying: ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Jn. 4:35
We will be blessed on the day of the harvest or once we did pass the 'four' or the 4 months of waiting. It takes 4 months from the time we sow the seed until we can expect a harvest. The 4 months of waiting imply that once the 4 dispensations ended, we will enter a new era. The promises of the law did culminate with the better promises of the new covenant. That happened with Christ's resurrection – Then the plea or the request of Eshtaol 13:25 will be granted to Israel.
Samson was moved by the Spirit of God.
Under the umbrella of the new covenant, the fruit will be gathered as the 4000 years ended between the creation of Adam and the arrival of the second Adam (Christ). At the time of the harvest when Samson went to his

wife the marriage should have been settled as with a marriage between Boaz and Ruth, at the time of the harvest.
Samson came with the offering of a goat, but this time his wife was gone, and her father wanted him to marry her younger sister. The woman or Israel snubbed him, but when we do read of the younger woman we need to be cautious.
We need to detect a hidden meaning, as the previous bride is Israel who rejected the Lord Jesus, and the younger daughter is the new reborn Israel, that will commune with Christ throughout the Millennium. In the Book of Judges, Samson merely portrays the truths related to Christ's first coming to earth that ended with a discord.
God used her infidelity, as a means to bless the heathen nations, but to Israel, it spelled disaster. Many histories in the Bible ended abruptly because they convey the mysteries of our time of waiting, and the new covenant. Never in the Bible is the Church named as the bride of Christ, but the young daughter portrays the new reborn Israel under the umbrella of the new covenant. Any student regards the history of Samson as a great failure, but not to us or the younger daughter who will be blessed by a new marriage!
In great fury, Samson went and caught 300 foxes and he tied them by their tails. He epitomises what will happen to the harvest. He took torches, and he tied their tails together, setting them alight. There were 150 pairs of chaotic running foxes. They caused havoc to both the standing and the stacked grain. They also set alight the olive orchards.
The torch epitomises the Word of God and the tail reflects the power and the strength of the foxes. The tail is an extension of their spine, strengthening their body. The tail expresses their power. The fat tail of the sheep were offered to God, and that in itself conveys a special meaning. Lev. 3:6-11 Both the hair and the tail has a similar connotation, particularly the foxes' hairy tail. Foxes are cunning as they bite with no warning. They never bark. In the New Testament someone is called a fox as he deceived so many people. The people thought he was the true messiah. He replied, ‘Go tell that fox, “I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.”’ Luke 13:32Herod was considered a fox as he maintained a false religion. When our Lord called Herod a fox, He portrayed his real character. Our Lord compared the birds of heaven with the foxes. And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. ' Matt. 8:20The birds in heaven are unclean, and they epitomise the Amorites or the wicked spiritual powers in heaven. In Daniel 4, we read of the huge tree nestling the birds of heaven in their branches. Abraham once had to chase the birds throughout the night as they wanted to devour the sacrifice he made to God. Gen. 15:11Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Woe to the foolish prophets who are following their own spirit and have seen nothing. O Israel, your prophets are like foxes in the deserts.’ Eze. 13:3,4The false prophets, who fabricate their own beliefs to suit their pockets, are hollow, like living in a desert. Their foolish spirit caused Israel to stumble. They said ‘thus says the Lord’ when He did not even speak to them.

The chaotic scene of the foxes running wild spoiling the harvest, do picture the sad setting of Israel abandoning the true God of Israel. It took them four months to secure a harvest, but it got burned by the false prophets who foolishly preached from their own heart. They are totally out of tune and never in accord with each other. That turmoil cost them dearly.

The harvest is Israel with all the promises God made to them. Instead of the grain being gathered in the silos it got burned by the Pharisees, Sadducees and all the religious leaders. Amongst their leaders, there was a continual strife, and they can never reach an accord. We merely need to study the New Testament to find their endless disputes. Whenever the torch or the Word of God appears to them, their first response is to argue with one another as they refuse to see Christ in the Scripture. When the flame or the torch appears there is no harmony, and in the end, the complete harvest is devoured in flames. When Paul had to defend himself, he cleverly diverted the attention from himself to the members of the high council. The members were Sadducees, and some were Pharisees, so he knew their differences.

Paul shouted, ‘brothers; I am a Pharisee, as were all my ancestors! And I am on trial because my hope is in the resurrection of the dead!' When he said that, a dispute broke out between them and the assembly was divided. Acts 23:6,7 The discord is equated to the two foxes that are tied together. The Pharisees argued and they never even noticed Paul who left to have a hearing at Rome. They fail to realise the resurrected Christ and beside Him, there is no resurrection or life. Another hot iron today is;

- do we live in the Kingdom or not,
- do God rule on earth today?
- Are we citizens of heaven or not?
- Did the snake speak in the Garden of Eden or not?

The burning question is not whether Satan or the snake did speak but rather the issue is – did God speak? Those sorts of questions caused great harm to the churches. Wherever the foxes do go they will cause havoc, and we don’t need to be troubled by them. The foxes ruined the harvest and the prophet Hosea 4:12 once said my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, because they did reject it. The knowledge is the Word of God and instead of the torch or the fire radiating the heat and the light to the other nations, it condemned them. The light or the torch appeared, and they have no knowledge or means to direct it. The torches were used to defeat the Midianites, and here the same torches that are tied to the foxes ruined their harvest.

The Word of God became a tool to judge the world. The tough questions the theologians do face today are the differences that usually hinge on the differences between the old or the new covenant; do we need faith or will our works suffice? Israel did reject Christ and today the world is left with the confusion regarding the simple truths found in His Word.

He burned both the standing grain on their acreage and the stacked grain. The grain, vineyards and the olive groves depict the new covenant. The Philistines portray the old man or Israel and they waited for four months but refused Christ. The harvest is ready, and the new covenant did dawn

for them, but instead it got burned and the land is left barren. Their city got burned Matt. 22:7 and there was no wedding or any communion between them. The discord today is not only amongst the Christians but also amongst the Jewish sector.
Then the Philistines asked who did this, and they told them it was Samson's father-in-law from Timnah, who gave Samson's wife to be married to his best man. So the Philistines went and burned the woman and her father to death. The judgement is not limited to the heathen people, but it will also spill over to the Israelites.
A woman and her father epitomise Israel.

* Firstly the whole harvest got burned, and that depicts the sad state of our world. * * Secondly Israel will be judged, and that is directed by the Philistines who revenged the destruction of their crops. They sentenced the woman and her father to death.
  The heathen people are also bent down with God's judgement, and they did judge Israel. Our old nature is cursed. Samson was denied the opportunity to commune with his rightful wife and in the end both the world and Israel are judged.
* Thirdly then Samson was wrathful against the Philistines as they killed his rightful wife and her father (Israel) and he again attacked them with the 'hip and thigh'. When

Samson attacked the Philistines it portrays the Lord who will revenge the nations who did war against the Israelites especially during the time of the great tribulation. The world or any nations who schemed to war against Israel will be judged by God, and certainly here it involves the Philistine people. Our Lord Jesus came to the world, and they refused him. Jn. 1:11 The Jewish nation did not receive the resurrected Christ, and they will be judged and similarly to any nation who aims to crush Israel.
Samson attacked them with the hip and thigh or the shoulder and thigh. That is simple parallelism, and that could denote the vertebra (between the shoulder and thigh) meaning he smote them on their vertebra, as in one modern translation of the Dutch Bible. The Psalms and also Paul spoke of the people who were bent in their unbelief.
'May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.' Ps. 69:23 Rom. 11 the heathen is bent beneath the judgement, and there is great discord amongst them, and continually they quarrel amongst themselves involving the details of the law. Israel is sucked into that warfare or judgement and the countries who warred against them will be punished.
Samson then dwelt on the top of the rock Etam. Etam is a place of ravenous creatures or eagles who snatch their prey from a cliff. Once Samson defeated his enemies, he was satisfied and rested, depicting the Church in heaven. That is the place we enjoy with Christ today.
The Philistines retaliated by setting up camp in Judah, and they raided the town of Ramath-Lehi. The place Lehi means jaw, and that is the place where Samson slew the Philistines with a jaw bone or mandible. The name Lehi may have been given to the place after Samson slew the Philistines with the jaw bone. v. 16

They demanded that the people of Judah had to deliver Samson to them so they could punish him correctly. Then an army of 3000 men from Judah went to Samson, and they argued with him that the Philistines were mightier than the Israelites and they needed to honour them. Obviously they collaborate with the enemy and in God's eyes they are traitors. Samson did slay the Philistines but the men asked Samson; what is this you have done to us? 15:11 don't you realise they are mightier than us? Even though God caused the victory for Israel they did not regard it as a blessing but rather as a curse. They told Samson he cannot just kill the Philistines, what prompted him to do it? Even though the old man (Philistines) is conquered via Samson, Israel regarded the victory as a curse. Sadly the 3000 men from Judah cursed Samson. Samson rightly judged the Philistines who deceived him, and he did whatever they deserved. Samson asked them if they wanted to kill him, but they assured him they would not slay him. They told him they would simply tie him down and then deliver him into the hands of the Philistines.
So they tied him with two new ropes and led him away from the rock. That explicitly portrays the discord in our dispensation between the Lord Jesus and the Jewish nation. Since the victory of the resurrected Christ, the Jewish nation wanted to bind him in keeping with the demands of the old man or the Pharisees. They wanted to bind Him once more with the old covenant and its many laws. Indeed we are free, and now the Jews or the religious sector wish to bind us with a rope! The tying down of Samson with a rope has to do with the old covenant and in the next chapter Samson is bound several times, but each time he frees himself. That is what the Lord Jesus did with his first coming to earth. He freed Israel from all its bonds, and they were freed indeed. The two new ropes are fundamental issues of the old covenant; it is a question of sin and the law. Rom. 6 & 7 We died with our Lord on the cross of Calvary, and we no longer live under the curse of the law. The Lord Jesus preached the freedom, but the Jews in accord with Pilate or the old covenant, decided to bind Samson or our Lord.
The Lord preached freedom to all people but the Jews with the Pharisees begged him to be tied down thinking that Samson on the loose would cause havoc amongst the people. The Jews also encouraged Paul to adhere to the law to avoid more disputes. They wanted to bind the Lord Jesus with their own teachings and Samson was advised to go in accord with the enemy, but instead he slaughtered them. They foolishly wanted to bind Samson thinking it would improve matters, but he would refuse any accord with them.
When he went down to Lehi, the Philistines mocked and ridiculed him as he walked between them. Then the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him so that the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and the ropes dropped from his hands. The utter glee of the Philistines changed to sheer horror.
Whenever we read 'the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him,' it implies our Lord's resurrection from the dead. That Spirit is blowing into each of us when we were kissed with the breath of His new life; yes we are resuscitated with the Word of God. The ropes that did tie him down

snapped as if they were strands of flax. That same Spirit also made Christ rise from the dead. The linen and the fire that burned the flax denotes Christ's resurrection and He will tear apart all hindrances. The spirit will give us life and Samson will be freed from whatever hindrances they tied him down. The Lord came to redeem those living under law, to make us His sons, and He will lead the way to the new covenant. Gal. 4:15
Then Samson found a fresh or moist jawbone of a donkey, and he killed a thousand men with it. The jaw of the donkey is large, and in the Bible a donkey once spoke. Num. 22 Donkeys or asses as they are mentioned more than 100 times in the Bible, and they do have a typological significance. The donkey makes a two-pitch sound that people generally describe as 'hee-haw' but the donkey of Balaam said more. The high pitch sound 'hee-haw' written in Hebrew, abbreviates the Name Jehovah. They depict our faith in God's written Word and typologically they are regarded as believers in God's Word. Balaam was astounded, and he fell down when he saw the angel of the Lord, as the angel used the donkey to speak to him. We use our lower jaw or mandible to speak as it needs to be constantly saturated by a constant flow of water or saliva. It's impossible to speak with a dry mouth. We are judged by what we speak as our words betray us. We can only speak if our mouths are bathed in saliva and the water and our words ought to be the Words of God. The wet and fresh lower jaw implies that the word or the Word of God is still trapped in it. They are the words of a believer that will judge the Philistines. When our Lord walked on earth He constantly said; 'but that is written'…. Even though the Ram is dead, He speaks via the horn and here with the mandible or the jaw bone.

The Significance of the Donkey's Jawbone

After Samson is betrayed he retaliates by catching 300 foxes, tying torches to their tails, and burning Philistine crops. The Philistines respond by escalating violence, prompting Samson to retreat to a cave in Etam. Judah ties him and hands him over, but he breaks the ropes.
The fresh jawbone moment: The Spirit of the Lord comes powerfully upon Samson. He finds a moist/fresh jawbone of a donkey (recently dead, still pliable with saliva/tissue), grabs it, and slays 1,000 Philistines.

Historical Importance

- Improvised Divine Weapon: A fresh jawbone (large, heavy, edged) is effective as a club. Using a donkey bone mocks Philistine strength while defying ritual impurity—God overrides rules for deliverance.
- Massive Victory: 1,000 slain underscores Samson's superhuman feat, beginning Israel's deliverance from 40-year Philistine oppression (Judges 13:1; he judges 20 years).
- Poetic Justice: Philistines dominate via superior arms; Samson uses

The Symbolic Significance foreshaws Christ's victory and the Church's participation:

- Donkey (Ass) → Humiliation/believer in Word. Donkeys speak truth (Balaam's ass, Num. 22); "hee-haw" echoes YHWH. Riding donkey into Jerusalem (Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5) = Christ's humble first coming. Slain donkey speaking = Dead-yet-speaking Christ (via "horn" trumpet or jawbone Word).
- Fresh/Moist Jawbone → Living Word saturated (saliva/water = Spirit/Word). Mouth speaks life/judgment; dry mouth = thirst for God. Jawbone traps "water" (Word); fresh = ongoing revelation.
- Wordplay "Ass upon Asses" → Christ (the Ass/humiliated One) + Church (asses upon asses/heaps). Believers share humiliation/victory; Word from Christ + Church slays enemies (spiritual Philistines/flesh).
- 1,000 Slain → Complete judgment via Word (1,000 = fullness).
- Thirst & En Hakkore → Post-victory thirst (Samson/Christ cries out); God cleaves jaw/hollow → Living water flows (John 4:14; 7:38). Church age: Word springs life amid battle.
- Ramath Lehi ("Height of Jaw") → Elevated Word/Church proclaiming truth.
- 20 Years Judging → 2,000-year Church age (dispensation of grace); Samson begins deliverance (cross bruises serpent's head, Gen. 3:15)

The donkey is slain, but he will speak to us.

‘And Samson said, with the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men,’ Judg. 15:16 KJV
The correct translation is the following:

‘And Samson saith, `With a jaw-bone of the ass -- an ass upon asses -- with a jaw-bone of the ass I have smitten a thousand men. ' Judg. 15:16 YNG
The translators had great difficulty in translating this verse.
The difficulty is that the root word for both asses and the heaps are similar. The real believer in this verse is the ‘Ass’ or the Lord Jesus with His first coming to earth. The others ‘heaps upon heaps’ or ‘the other asses’ is none other than His fellow believers or the Church. A donkey or an ass portrays the humiliations our Lord experienced with His first coming to earth, as He rode on an ass descending down Mount Olives. Matt. 21:5We who are part of the Church share in His humiliation and therefore the ‘ass upon asses’ depict us as we too will share in the victory of Christ. With His second coming to earth, Christ will appear riding on a horse and not an ass, as He will appear in glory. It is not only the jaw bone of the ‘One’ ass, but there are many more, denoted by the ‘ass upon asses’. The Philistines were slain by the Words of the true Believer or Christ, but also the Church (ass upon asses). Samson did speak the Words of God, and when he finished speaking, he had a dry mouth. He threw aside the jawbone, and the place is called Ramath Lehi. It means the height of the jaw, and that is where the jaw is noticeable as it conveys the truths regarding the Church of today.
Samson who spoke repeatedly became thirsty, and he cried to God; ‘You did accomplish this great victory by the strength of your servant. Must I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of these pagan people? ’Then God opened up the hollow place in Lehi, and water came gushing out. When Samson drank, his strength returned, and he revived. So the spring was called En Hakkore, and that could also be translated as; God cleaved the hollow of the jaw. He split the jaw in two and water gushed out. Our lower mandible is like a bowl trapping the water or saliva. The hollow place of Lehi (jaw) will be a spring of water. If we thirst, we can drink from that living spring. Samson named that place Enhakkore, meaning the spring of the one who cried out.
Samson ruled Israel for 20 years and the two depicts our dispensation lasting 2000 years. That chapter continually refers to our times. Samson commenced the deliverance for Israel, but David conquered the Philistines. With our Lord’s first coming to earth, the head of the snake is bruised and similarly our Lord’s heel at Calvary. Gen. 3:15 The supremacy of the Philistine people did degenerate when Samson became a judge, but restricted. Throughout the time of Samson, the Word or the water of the ass quietened them.
Judges 16For most people chapter 16 is so upsetting, and the main argument is usually why at such a critical time, Samson dared to engage himself with a harlot. Previously Samson’s life is debatable and it had many flaws. This chapter especially seems to convince them that his behaviour proved awkward and they debate if he was a godly man.
The first difficulty is why did he choose to marry a Philistine woman. To engage with a harlot he accidentally saw among the Philistines was a sacrilege of his honour, destroying his true heritage. To claim to be a Nazarite can merely make you blush!

Remember Samson did portray our Lord's first coming to earth and this chapter vividly converses our Lord's experience with Israel. Even the Lord spoke of His own wife as if she was a harlot. Both Hosea and Ezekiel ch. 16 do portray Israel as a harlot, and even Hosea had to marry one.
'Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the Lord.' Hos. 1:2
Here Hosea portrays Christ Himself and the woman is Israel or the harlot. Even before his marriage she is regarded as a harlot, and he married a defiled woman and things didn't change. When our Lord was on earth, He was seen many a time in the company of the tax collectors and the harlots. The harlots portray Israel, and we are familiar that the Lord went to seek those who were lost, and He was repeatedly found in their company.
Samson seeking the company of the harlot portrays the Lord Jesus, who did converse with our world. It denotes the time of the old covenant, and that is clear.
Gaza was the capital and the largest of the five Philistine cities as Ashkelon was the other city. It is placed on the border of Judah, and the Canaanite and the Philistines who lived there migrated as nomads. We are aware of the giants who lived at Gaza, Gad and Ashdod. Josh. 11:22 They are three well-known Philistine cities. The Anakites were giants, and they were the offspring of the fallen angels. Gen. 6 They were the same people who caused the deluge of Noah and this interbreeding continued even after the deluge. They lived in Gaza and there we are faced with the great contender. Gaza belonged to the tribe of Judah. Josh. 15:47 and previously Judah captured the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron, along with their surrounding territories. Judg. 1:18 The city Gaza was promised to Judah. Samson going to Gaza (Judah) is the Lord Jesus going to Judah and He went to Israel to commune with them. The Philistines lived unlawfully at Gaza, as it is part of the Promised Land.
In Hebrew Gaza means strong or fortified, as it portrays the power of the old creation. The prophets foretold that Gaza will be punished and the reason why is not because they are part of the Philistine people. No, it is because they epitomise natural Israel living from the tree of good and evil, or the law. Certainly they will be punished, as Gaza, who portrays Israel as living as part of the old covenant.
Even Philip went to Gaza and there he was told to meet an Ethiopian eunuch, who did receive Christ. Acts 8:26-27
Soon afterwards the people living in Gaza knew of Samson and they thought he was trapped. The city was secured by a high wall and gates, and they would surprise him. Samson who lived in Gaza is like Israel ensnared by the law or the old covenant. The people thought that the next morning they could capture him easily, with the idea to execute him. They locked the gates and waited until dawn.
The time of the old covenant corresponds to the darkest time of the night or our age. It says that the people who lived in darkness will see a great light. 'On those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.' Matt. 4:16

The new covenant is the light and Samson living in Gaza is Israel living in darkness and the fate of the town needs to wait until the morning. There is no peace, and the atmosphere is tense. At daybreak that restless situation will end. Each person was locked in the confine of the city, and they needed to wait until the morning.
We need to bear in mind that even before the dawning of the new covenant, Christ preached the new covenant and Samson's life portrays this. Every person who lived at Gaza did live in darkness, and the doors were shut. They thought in the morning their plans would succeed. Samson woke at midnight when it was totally dark, the time when the people thought no guards were necessary as the doors were secured. However, Samson did escape with the armoured door. He plucked up the posts, taking the gate with all its bolts. That gate was very heavy and yet for several miles he carried it on his shoulders, up to the top of a hill at Hebron. Samson proved once more his great strength, the strength God gave him.
That pictures Christ's victory over death. Not only is the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, but He appeared to many, mocking the restraint the grave had on Him. Now there is an open gate for us and the fear of death or the abyss will never threaten us again.
'O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law.' 1 Cor. 15:55-56
The whole door and everything that secured it disappeared, and what was deemed impossible under the confines of the old covenant disappeared. We are freed from the law and the sin. Now the people think we cannot live without the law and its many principles. Our whole world hinges on its many laws and even today the political leaders attempt to lessen them, but that seems impossible. Now we need someone who is capable and strong and Christ secured that victory for us. He appeared at the right moment.
The gates of any city control whoever enters or who leaves the city. If any person failed to adhere to the laws of the city, they were only told to leave the city. At the gates, the judges used to gather as in the time of Ruth, when they decided her fate. Lot also sat at the gates of Sodom, and he was involved with their affairs. The gate usually encloses a large porch, and that is where the elders of the town and even the king used to rule, to endorse its many laws. It's easy to be engaged by the intricacies of any law, and sadly Lot chose to return to our world's leading philosophies. Heb. 5:12 All we need to do is to escape from the demur of the world and to bond ourselves with the living Christ. When the Lord Jesus preached He left the world and sat in a boat on the seashore, and from the boat He preached to the people. The gates are the old covenant, and we don't need to comply with its rules. We are severed from the confines of the old covenant. Since we left the house, God imparted to us the richness of His Glory and He revealed the mysteries of His will.
'The Lord will guard our going out and our coming in from that time forth and forevermore.' Ps. 121:8 Once we relinquish our rights that are tied to the house of the laws, He will defend us in whatever way we choose.

On the day when Sodom and Gomorrah fell, the people enticed Lot, but they were blinded and could not even find the door to harm him. Throughout the Bible, we have instances where the weight of the story hinges on the door. At Egypt during the time of the Passover, the life of the Passover Lamb or Christ was smeared to the door. The door was alive and throughout the night the fate of the firstborn was clinched; deciding who went in or out – or who lived and who died. The Israelites were encouraged to leave the door of slavery to be ushered to a new dispensation.

Three days later another massive obstacle appeared. It was the waters of the Red Sea, but finally it paved their way to the Promised Land. Christ is the 'door', and He is the way to lead us to heaven. Jn. 14:6'Unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder.' Isa. 9:6

As Samson had the door on his shoulders, likewise Christ too had the governance on His shoulders. Having no gates, Gaza became vulnerable, and the new governance is now at Hebron, located high in the mountains. If Gaza epitomises the old covenant or Israel, then Hebron portrays the new covenant or the Church.

Samson took the post at midnight to the top of the mountain, impounding the supremacy Gaza had, and he boldly placed them at Hebron, ending the dark era of Gaza. Our future is settled at Hebron, and we are flooded by the sheer brilliance of His light. He left behind the harlot (Israel) and the people at Gaza. If Gaza epitomised the old covenant then Hebron will radiate the truths of the new covenant.

Hebron or Chevron stems from the Hebrew word 'chaver' or 'friend' and it conveys unity. Hebron is a place of communion, and it is located west of the river Jordan, having a higher altitude than Jerusalem. If there is any city to symbolise the Church, it will be Hebron. It is one of the first dwelling places for Abraham in Canaan, Gen. 13 and the oak at Hebron is renowned, having an altar. In Hebrew 13:10 it says that we have an altar, and Abraham who epitomised the believers today chose to live there. Strangely the history of Hebron is mentioned in the Book of Numbers, stating the time it was built.

'Going northward, they passed first through the Negev and arrived at Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai – all descendants of Anak – lived. The ancient town of Hebron was founded seven years before the Egyptian city of Zoan.' Num. 13:22As with Gaza the city of Hebron also had giants that caused the great deluge of Noah. In the Bible, we will discover that the city of Zoan is figuratively tied to Jerusalem. At Hebron where the giants used to live was built 7 years before Zoan. Later in Scripture both Hebron and Jerusalem (Zoan) are cited again. King David ruled for 7 years at Hebron before he began to rule at Jerusalem. His kingdom at Hebron commenced 7 years before his kingdom was established over all the 12 tribes of Israel at Jerusalem. During the first 7 years of David's reign, he only ruled the two tribes of Israel, and it was outside Jerusalem. In short the first 7 years of David's kingdom portrays the hidden kingdom of Christ and the next 33 years at Jerusalem, His visible kingdom on earth. Therefore Hebron relays the Church and the time of Hebron corresponding to our dispensation lasting 2000 years.

Christ is our King at Hebron, located at a high place, and not Jerusalem. That is not at Mount Zion or Jerusalem but at a Mount where there is real unity.
The Lord instructed Joshua to assign some of Judah's territory to Caleb, and he was the son of Jephunneh. So Caleb was given the city of Arba (that is, Hebron), which had been named after Anak's ancestor. Josh. 15:13 Arba was the father of Anak, a heathen. Hebron is given to Judah and Caleb was not a Jew, but he became one. He was a heathen yet he shared in the blessings of Israel. Caleb epitomises the Church today and in Hebrew his name means a dog or a heathen.
The following cities were designated as cities of refuge: Kedesh of Galilee, in the hill country of Naphtali; Shechem, in the hill country of Ephraim; and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), in the hill country of Judah. Josh. 20:2 In the history of Barak, we already mentioned Kadesh and Naphtali. Hebron is one of the cities of refuge. If any person killed someone, he is vulnerable, as the avenger of blood will follow him to do justice. If it was a mere accident, he had the opportunity to escape to one of those allotted cities. Today the avenger is not Satan but rather Christ. One of the cities of refuge is Hebron and today the cities epitomise the Church as we are redeemed, and we are pardoned of the Lord's death. Our place is at Hebron and any person who ridiculed our Lord Jesus will be punished. Every Jew is accountable for His death, and that can be settled. Judas who deceived the Lord was knowledgeable of His death, and he got punished. The cities of refuge are a safe haven and Jerusalem today is no such city. God will forgive any person based on his faith and similarly when the Jews do accept Christ, then God will forgive them.
The Zionist movement is no answer, and they are vulnerable; the only safe haven for them is the cities of refuge or the Church. Now Jerusalem is no such city, and they are equated to Gaza or Sodom and Gomorrah. Gaza is desolate, and its gates are wide open. Jerusalem will be besieged, as many Prophets in the Old Testament prophesied it. The Lord Jesus became the Messiah with His resurrection and then He was anointed as the Son of God. Rom. 1:4 It is irrelevant if the Jews rejected the Lord Jesus before His death, but if any today do snub the risen Christ, they will be punished. The truths surrounding the risen Christ were vague before His death, but in the Book of Acts 2:29 Peter can freely commune those truths to us. With Christ's resurrection, He was anointed with the Spirit. 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made that Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ (Messiah).' Acts 2:36Both Israel and the world are guilty, and we did it unknowingly. Our only escape is to flee in faith to the city of refuge. If we reject Him, we are co-responsible for His death. In the confines of any city of refuge, we are guilty but freed. Our Lord prayed to God to forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. Luke 23:34 Once the Jews accept Christ it will spell the end of Judaism and all their religious ceremonies. The Jews together with Pilate, who spoke on behalf of the heathen nations did scheme to put Him to death. If we hide at Hebron, we will be proved innocent, to be ruled by the High Priest, in the city of refuge, and not by Judah or a king. The rules inside the cities of refuge are different, and they are not ruled by King

David or Judah but Levi or the firstborn of Levi namely the High Priest. Legally the 6 cities of refuge did belong to the high priest or the tribe of Levi, and not to the tribes living adjacent to the city. We have a High Priest that will never die and He will redeem us. We are subjected to the jurisdiction of the High Priest and the framework of the cities of refuge is the freedom of the new covenant. Peter said that the Jews did crucify the Lord, but the heathen were instrumental in His death. The complete world is guilty and we too, but once we are at Hebron we are forever pardoned, as our High Priest or Christ lives forever.
Previously at Hebron the trumpet was blown and then Absalom would have become king. It portrays the kingship of Christ, as then the king was not at Jerusalem but at Hebron. Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel saying to them, ‘As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, “Absalom is king in Hebron.
”’Absalom meaning ‘my father is peace’ will reign once the trumpets are blown.
Afterward it happened that Samson loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. The woman is Israel and in Hebrew the word Sorek means a ‘choice vine’. The vine is Israel, and today many surnames include the name e. g. Mr Vine who is a Jew, and he wrote the famous Vine’s concordance. Israel is a spreading vine Hos. 10:1 and the word Sorek suggests it. The word Delilah is Dlila, stems from the root ‘dal’ meaning weakly or poor. The reason is she is constantly burdened and that pictures Israel today. It is the Lord who pitied Israel or Samson who consoled Delilah. The leaders of the Philistine people went to Delilah and asked her to find the reason why Samson is so powerful and strong, and how they could restrain him securely. They thought the seducing powers of a woman could expose his weaknesses. Delilah portrays Israel and her doings are influenced by the Philistine people, the world or the old man. Even though Israel was called by Jehovah they followed the wishes of the surrounding nations, and even made a covenant with them. Today it is not much different as the Church is influenced by the politicians. The Philistines approached Delilah as they wanted to undermine Samson’s power, to make him harmless. As a reward, they offered her 1100 pieces of silver. Delilah is Israel, and the Philistines or the old man influenced her. Delilah aimed to find the core of his power and to render him powerless. The number 1100 is not only found here but also in the next chapter. Micah had the 1100 pieces, and he made the teraphim that ended in idolatry. Eleven is 12 minus 1 and 12 conveys the kingdom or the new Jerusalem with its 12 foundations. The number 11 has many promises but annoyingly it does not fulfil the promises of the 12. We can trace the significance of the number 11 in the Bible:
* Throughout the Bible’s history we read of the 12 that should have been there, but there were only 11. They were the 11 sons of Jacob, and their history ended with a miserable drought. Joseph became the 12th and Ephraim the 13th. After Christ’s crucifixion, there were only 11 Apostles, and they needed to vote for the 12th. Early in the Book of Acts the 11 disciples asked the Lord if, during their time, He would commence His promised kingdom with Israel? Acts 1:6. The Kingdom will be delayed as

the remaining 11 disciples had to wait for the promises in Christ. Samson's time denotes our dispensation as we too eagerly await Christ's future return and His kingdom. We are wedged in the 11. The uncertainty of the 11 will end once the 12 are united, once Jacob is reunited with Joseph. Then they enjoyed a prosperous time and the kingdom commenced for them.

* When Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old, he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for 11 years, before Babylon took Israel captive. For Israel, the kingdom had to commence but their dreams were shattered. A little later Jerusalem is again shaken when the temple got burned down. Then Zedekiah reigned in Jerusalem for 11 years, and he became king when he was only 21 years old, even though he was established in office by King Nebuchadnezzar.
* It was an 11-day journey for Israel from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea. Deut. 1:2. At Kadesh Barnea, the Israelites were punished, and they did not follow a direct route to the Promised Land, Canaan.
* Both Joshua and Joseph died when they were 110 years old as they awaited the promises of His kingdom. They redeemed Israel, but it did not trigger their final deliverance. The true Joseph or Joshua will lead them, but Christ or the true Joseph or Joshua will pave the way to His final Kingdom.
* In the New Testament we read of the 11th hour when the harvest was ripe, and then the men stood idle in the 11th hour. They expected a great harvest, but things did go wrong. Matt. 20. The harvest was ripe, but there was a great dispute amongst the people. The reason for the dispute is that the workers who commenced working in the 11th hour (17:00) got paid the same wages as the workers who worked all day long! (From 08:00.) The workers who worked all day did it half-heartedly expecting a far greater reward than the workers who worked for only one hour. Those who worked for 1 hour from the 11th to the 12th hour picture the Church and they are blessed handsomely, as they are the last and yet the first! Matt. 19:30. Delilah begged Samson for an answer and eventually he told her that if they bound him with seven fresh cords (bowstrings) that had dried, then he would become weak like all the other men. So the Philistine leaders brought Delilah seven new fresh cords, and she tied Samson with them. Delilah did hide some men in one of the rooms of her house, and she cried out, 'Samson, the Philistines have come to capture you!' But Samson snapped the bowstrings as if they were burned by fire. It snapped with ease.

Before Samson shaved his head he was tied down with: seven fresh bowstrings, v. 8; new ropes that had never been used before, v. 11; and by his own hair that was tied to the loom and probably fixed to the wall, v. 14. Samson confided in her how to restrain him, but it did not seem to pin him down.

Firstly Samson told Delilah to tie him down with seven fresh bowstrings. The string material was fresh as sinew, as it is used on the bow. That Hebrew word is only found here. In Hebrew, the word bowstrings is 'yether', and the son of Gideon is also named Jether. Then Gideon wanted Jether to slay the 2 Midianite kings but he refused. Judg. 8:20. Jether

means better, affluent or exceeding. He told Jether to kill the two Midianite kings and finally Gideon slew him and why not Jether? The answer is that Jether pictures the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. That is a ‘better’ high priesthood than that of Aaron; as Aaron epitomises the priest of the old covenant. In the Old Testament, we find a priestly order not after the order of Aaron but of a far greater degree. The High Priest after the order of Melchizedek will be everlasting, and Christ is such One. Jether (meaning better or exceeding) is a type and Christ Himself. Jether and Jethro the father-in-law of Moses had a similar name, in contrast to Moses and Aaron. Jethro or Moses’ father-in-law portrays the priestly duties of Melchizedek as he used to lead Moses. I believe Abraham also portrayed the priestly duty of Melchizedek, and that is portrayed by Jether as he is not from Aaron. Melchizedek, who did visit Abraham, was the Lord Himself. Jethro who commanded Moses was not from Aaron but from a greater order. The bowstring in this chapter does convey the truths tied up with Jether and Jethro. It conveys the High Priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchizedek. In a positive sense, the younger generation or new in the Bible always denote the new creation or the resurrected Christ. In the history of Gideon the youth is Jether. He portrays the new covenant, and that is better than the old. He will not execute us as the king did to the 2 Midianite kings. The city of refuge is different as there the high priest rules and not the king. Aaron was the high priest after the old covenant and Jether the high priest of the new covenant. The 7 fresh bowstrings of Samson are the cords of the new covenant. In the Old Testament, the people used to be tied down by the weight of the old covenant, as they were encumbered with its many demands, and we are freed from them. Samson or us, who are tied with the cords of the new covenant, will not restrain us as in essence the new covenant cannot bind us. We are free indeed. The people nurturing the principles of the old covenant will be ensnared by cords of the law and sin. The 7 do convey Christ’s completed work for us and our promised rest. With Christ’s resurrection, He opened a new (fresh) and life-giving way to heaven. Heb. 10:20. The fresh cords relate to Christ’s work according to the High Priesthood of Melchizedek. The old covenant is binding and knotted, but the new covenant is flowing. Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Matt. 18:18.

Peter, who did address Israel after Christ’s resurrection, commanded the Jewish nation. Whatever Peter loosened on earth, were undone in heaven and figuratively the ropes or the bowstring that was snapped by Samson, relates to that. In no way do they transmit the duties of the Pope. On earth, the old covenant will be tied down and likewise in heaven, and strings of the new covenant will be undone in heaven and on earth. The world will not notice anything, and they will scorn the message of Peter, but in heaven his message is sound and valid. Peter was the first to preach Christ on the day of Pentecost and he opened the treasures. To bind someone has to do with a covenant and each time they tried to bind Samson, he loosened himself. The gates of Gaza did not hold him, and

Samson foreshadows Christ's humiliation, death, resurrection, and ultimate triumph. Samson's voluntary weakness leading to greater victory through death. Samson's "fall" (betrayal, binding, imprisonment, grinding in Gaza) appears as defeat and the Philistines gloat, praising Dagon for capturing Israel's deliverer.

Samson's rise comes in apparent weakness: Hair regrows (Nazirite vow renews quietly); at Dagon's temple feast (mockery peak), Samson prays once more. Leaning on the pillars (law/sin/old creation), he cries, "Let me die with the Philistines!"—collapsing the temple, killing more in death (~3,000 leaders/people) than in life.

God uses flawed vessels, turning human failure into divine victory.

Typological Significance:

Samson prefigures Christ's first coming (humiliation) and the Church age:

- Delilah/Philistines → Israel/world/old man seducing/betraying the Anointed (Samson = dedicated/Nazirite like Christ).
- Four binding attempts → Futile efforts to restrain new covenant truths:

similarly the fresh cords. We lose our freedom once we subject ourselves to Christ, to place ourselves under the confines of the new covenant, and it will not restrict us as the ropes of the old covenant. A covenant is binding, and that is the real meaning of the ropes. The ropes will not tie us down as we are free indeed. With the bowstring, we are reminded of Jether, Jethro and Melchizedek. We were freed from all bondages when we accepted Christ, and we acknowledge the counsel of God. Acts 20:27. That is binding but the cord will break as we do enjoy great freedom in Christ. Delilah did try to tie him down, but Samson freed himself and similarly we are freed today, because we have a far greater future in Melchizedek. (Jether and Jethro.) We are placed in the confines of His freedom. Jethro was the father-in-law of Moses and in Hebrew his name means abundance or affluence. In the Book of Hebrews, the word ‘better’ occurs 13 times. We enjoy an abundant life having great freedom. We live at Hebron where the gates of Gaza were placed, and there our High Priest intercedes for us. Even if the world tries to pin us down, we are freed in Christ. If we dare to tell some Christians that we are indeed free, many will retort saying the contrary, desiring to drag us down. Afterwards, Delilah said to him; you made fun of me, so you told me a lie! Please tell me how you can be tied securely. Samson replied: If I am tied up with brand-new ropes that have never been used, I will be as weak as anyone else. So Delilah took new ropes and tied him up with them. The new ropes were snapped as if they were thread. Delilah had the opportunity to tie Samson down with new ropes. The ropes were newly strung, and they were never used before. Now obviously they portray the new covenant and not the old. A rope is interwoven with millions of strands of fibre. In the Hebrew, the word means to be interwoven as the millions of fibres bind in unison creating a rope. That rope is different to a sinew. The many details involving the new covenant are the many fibres of the new covenant and jointly they convey the same truths regarding Christ, but from a different perspective. A robe is complex as the fibres are twisted together. They picture the intricacy of the new covenant and the truths regarding Christ. The many fibres are found in the symbolism of the Old Testament and they do find each other in the truths of the New Testament. They all come together in Christ. Peter had trouble to understand the impact of the new covenant, and he referred to Paul as he was acquainted with the new covenant. Peter wanted to know whether he had to abide by the law or not. Acts 15. Peter says that he did not invent clever stories when he told them about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and his final return to earth. 2 Peter 1:16. They were not fabricated stories, but they were rooted in the Old Testament; they are cleverly woven together as the many fibres in a rope. The new covenant is brilliant and in no way a simple story. Paul once said: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Rom. 11:33. The many new fibres are the many truths of the new covenant that will free us. There are many thoughts that originate in the Old Testament that can only be grasped in the light of the new covenant. If we follow Christ we will indeed be free, and our knowledge of Him will free us. John 8:36. We are secured by the truths and certainly they freed us. We are tied and yet free, and unknowingly Samson did communicate them. Then Delilah snapped at Samson saying you deceived me again, and he told her to weave the seven locks of his hair in a web and fasten it with a pin, then I will become weak and be like any other man. Again that proved futile as Samson tied his hair into the loom. Then Delilah sulked, How can you say you love me when you don't confide in me? You've made fun of me three times, and you still haven't told me what makes you so strong! Delilah had to weave the seven locks of his hair into the web of the loom, which is used by craftsmen as a weaver’s shuttle. 16:13. The following verse says that she tightened it with a pin. Delilah wanted to deceive Samson for a handsome sum of money and she needed to listen to him, but she was fooled. To make the verses meaningful, we can deduce that the web of the loom is the pin. When Samson awoke from his sleep, he yanked his head away from the loom or the pin with the web. Verse 14 says that the pin and the loom are the same. According to the Hebrew text we can either read the word ‘namely’ or ‘and’, and we can decide which of them is appropriate to use. The hair used to be tied into 7 strands, and the hair conveys the beauty, the power and the glory Samson had. Absalom also had long hair and it says that, in all Israel, there was not a man more highly praised than him, being handsome. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish. 2 Sam. 14:25. The 7 also portrays the power and the glory our Lord had on earth. That power was flaunted by Samson, and the hair was tied to the loom or pin. The loom is the web of a weaver, and it has to do with the making of the fabric. In many ways, the fabric does radiate the power and the valour of the Messiah. We are clothed with that majesty. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments. Rev. 3:5. A cloth is woven and similarly Samson’s hair. The ‘Sheep’ or our Lord who was slain at Calvary, He was shaved, and we are clothed with the wool. The wool is interlaced by millions of threads to form a fabric. Firstly we had sinews and then the new ropes. Now we have a more complex interlaced pattern to create a fabric. Delilah wove Samson’s hair and fixed it with the pin. We have no difficulty to understand the meaning of the peg that penetrated the skull of Sisera the Midianite leader. Judg. 4:21. In Hebrew, the word peg is similar to the word pin or nail, and it is sharp and long, essential for weaving. The peg that pierced Sisera is figuratively the same as used with our Lord's crucifixion. At that moment, the 'tent' or our world did fall apart. The foundations of our world

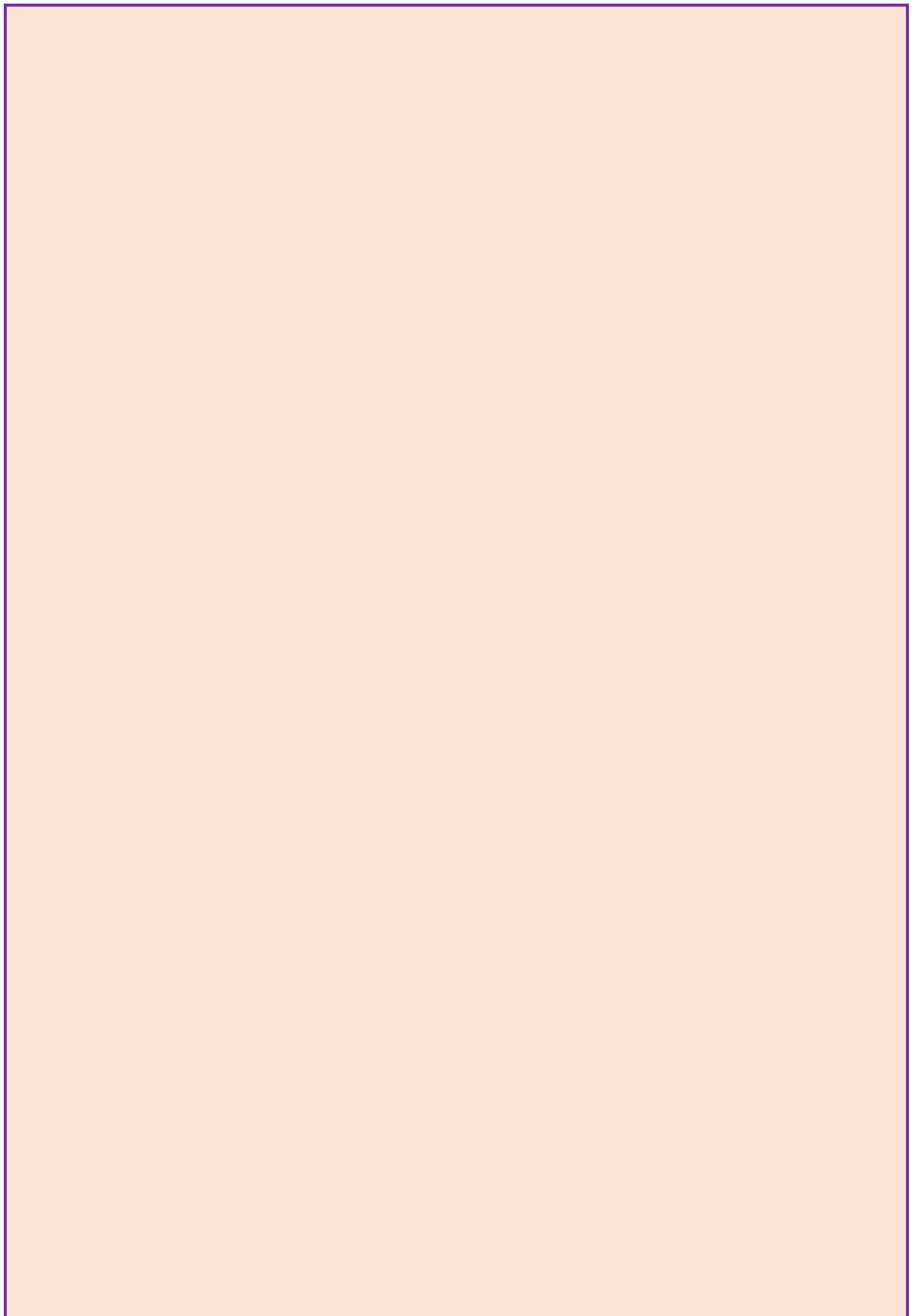
are insecure and the peg that pierced our Lord's feet, penetrated the serpent’s head. Gen. 3:15. The pin or the peg did harness the power of Samson’s hair and it is difficult to picture this. Figuratively the woven hair in the harness is the new covenant, and it will be freed from any restraint. The many strands of hair that tied him down were disentangled. The new covenant will free us and the peg will not penetrate our skull. Delilah was dismayed and knew it was impossible to pin down Samson as he pictures the old man. The new creation in Christ will defy all restraints. It is complex, and the 'old' will never burden us, as the truths of the new covenant are easy to grasp and it is no burden for us. 'For my yoke is easy and My burden is light. ' Matt. 11:30. After many days of nagging until he couldn't stand it any longer, he told her. In all Samson was tied down 4 times and the power inside of him exceeded the power of the rope or the old covenant. The 4th time Samson gave Delilah the real secret. My hair has never been cut; he confessed, as I was dedicated to God as a Nazarene from my birth. If my head is shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as anyone else.’ Delilah knew he finally told her the truth, so she sent for the Philistine leaders. Come back one more time, she said, for he has told me everything. So the Philistine leaders returned and brought the money with them. Delilah lulled Samson to sleep with his head in her lap, and she called in a man to shave off his hair, securing his capture. Certainly his strength left him. Then she cried out, Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you! When he woke up, he thought, I will do as before and shake myself free. But he didn't know the Lord had left him. So the Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They took him to Gaza, where he was bound with bronze chains and made to grind grain in the prison. Delilah was persistent and in the end Samson leaked the real source of his power. Being a Nazarene is equated to God having no beginning or end, and Samson was told not to converse with either death or life. (the fruits of the vine.) God is unchanging and for Him there is no variation between life and death. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. ' James 1:17. Samson’s power is likened to the power of God. We who accepted Christ, are endowed with the same power. Paul spurred us to know Him and the power of His resurrection. Phil. 3:10. Our power is invested in the incorruptible. Even when Samson leaked the truth to end his responsibility as a Nazarene, it did not end by cutting his hair. His strength left him briefly. The Old Testament mentions this frequently, and his power undoubtedly left him but it did return. Num. 6. Before long Samson’s hair started to grow again, and his strength did return. The Philistines were oblivious of that and Samson's strength returning is equated to the Lord, who resurrected from the dead. Willingly our Lord

had to die as the 'eternal' at Calvary. He laid down His life for us and He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, ‘And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.’ Isa. 53:7. Symbolically He was also shaven as Samson. Samson did lose his power and to many his life ended tragically, but that was brief! On the previous three occasions when he was tied down, he did retain his power immediately, but with the shearing of his hair, the power did return, but it took a long time. The power did leave him but afterwards when it did return, he killed more Philistines than ever before. Once more he became a Nazarene, and that epitomises our rebirth; He became a Nazarene of a far higher order. When they shaved Samson’s hair, he lost his power as with our Lord’s crucifixion. It also pictures Absalom, who died hanging in a tree. The Philistines thought they were victorious, and Samson did feel despondent. It is similar to the words our Lord spoke on the cross: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? Psalm 22:1. He will be redeemed but with His resurrection from the dead. At the time of our Lord’s death, there was no escape but God redeemed Him with His resurrection. Similarly Samson felt disheartened but his strength did return. At the time of our Lord’s crucifixion, there was no respite. God was close at hand and He did not deliver Him, as He was encumbered with our sins: ‘Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him.’ Isa. 53:10. When Delilah shaved Samson he was not delivered but he would be freed on a later occasion. The gods of heaven or the Philistines’ thought they were victorious as with our Lord's death. 'The rulers of this world never understood or knew that Christ would resurrect; and if they had, they would never have crucified Him.' 1 Cor. 2:8. Christ will never boost the old creation, but once He returns He will manifest the glory of the new covenant. The Philistines gouged both of Samson’s eyes, and he was blinded. He is naive of the people around him, and that is similar to our Lord who did hide his face, as it is easily traced in the Hebrew language. Isa. 53:3. He hid His face and simultaneously the world ignored Him. Since His death, our Lord disregards our world and even the old man. They are given over to all sorts of filth. So God let them go ahead and do whatever shameful things their hearts desire. Rom. 1:24. Samson was taken to prison and he was oblivious of the world around him, and similarly Christ did judge the world and the old man, and being in heaven our world’s fate does not concern Him. His interest is tied to the new covenant or the things we cannot see. Our treasure is invested in the unseen, and all the truths concerning our dispensation involve the unseen. Even when Samson caused the temple to tumble he did not notice the consequences or the many people who died. His powers returned, but he remained blind. They took him to Gaza, and they bound him with two copper chains. Now Gaza epitomises our world and figuratively if we do wish to see our Lord,

we will find Him imprisoned at Gaza and tied by chains of copper. His life is branded by the copper and there is something special about the copper. The gematria of the word copper is 358, which is similar to the words Messiah, the Anointed or Christ. Gematria is the calculation of the numerical equivalence of letters, words, or phrases. Thus copper symbolises Christ's work of reconciliation. The sinner is cleansed to enable him to approach God. Copper is related to the word 'kafar', meaning reconciliation. There needs to be a 'ransom' for our sins. 'So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole, and so it was if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.' Num. 21:9. In Hebrew, the word snake and serpent is similar, and the risen snake is Christ, who procured the atonement. John 3:15. After Christ resurrected from the dead He was exalted and the Israelites as Moses had to look at the serpent or the risen Christ to live. Our Lord is not troubled about our world, the economy or any person who scorns Him. He now confronts us with His Gospel and if we respond He will draw us from this world to be placed in prison, outside the commune, as at Gaza in Samson's history. Samson did grind the grain in the prison, and he was not lazy. He did that as he cared for his co-prisoners. That is equated to Christ's work for us today. Christ is our High Priest and He will render us spotless before God. Soon his hair began to grow and once more he became a Nazarene. It commenced once more, and Samson is a type of God who humbled himself to become obedient unto death. He paved the way to a total new covenant. The new covenant is binding, and Samson's strength will return. The Philistine leaders held a great festival, offering sacrifices and they praised their god, Dagon. Dagon was the god of the Philistines, and it can be imagined as a creature in the shape of a fish. The demon Dagon as being both a man and a fish. The name 'Dagon' is derived from 'dag' which means 'fish.' He is also known as Neptune as he is the god of the sea. Neptune was the name that the ancient Romans gave to the Greek god of the sea and the earthquakes. Neptune is a fish god, and he was the brother of Jupiter (Zeus) and Pluto. (Hades.) Dagon was the god of the Philistines' but he was worshipped earlier by the Syrians and the Babylonians. The god of the fishes, is Poseidon, Neptune or Dagon, but they are also known as the gods of the horses. There is a rivalry amongst them, and that reflects Satan. Their history is riddled by the deep waters of the sea as their kingdoms did end in the deep water. That happened in the previous creation of the world - before the time of Adam and Eve. They did influence the previously ruined world. The god of the past world is Atlantis, and now his famous city did sink to the realms of the deep waters as mentioned in Genesis. 1:1, 2. The old world 'that was' did descend to the bottom of the sea. Peter spoke of this, and the god of that world is Satan, and he wishes to rule our world and similarly

Poseidon, Neptune or Dagon. They desire to live on our world as theirs is

ruined. Now the



Philistines have no land that belongs to them, and they are known as a wandering nation. That portrays the restlessness of Dagon as he strives to be part of our world. He did not only represent the Philistine people but also the Amorites, the god of the former world. The feast happened to be in the house of Dagon and figuratively they convey the complete old covenant or creation; there were hoards of people inside the temple and upon its roof. The Philistines thought that Dagon caused the victory over their enemy Samson. When the people saw him, they praised Dagon, saying, ‘Our god has delivered our enemy to us.’ Samson was despised as he killed so many of them, and now he is subjected to them. Half-drunk the people pleaded to bring out Samson so he can do something for them. He was brought from the prison and was made to stand in the centre of the temple, between the two pillars supporting the roof structure. Samson told the servant who led him by the hand, to place his hands upon the two pillars. Two main pillars supported the temple and figuratively they are the law and the sin, with its many principles. Now the old creation has no foundation as it is made redundant. We did speak of the ropes that tied Samson but now we address the ropes or the strategy that binds the house of Satan. The ropes or cords of the old covenant are broken and reduced to rubble. Samson stood between them saying I want to rest against the pillars. The temple was crammed with people. Today our world is overpopulated, and that is symbolised by the many Philistine leaders who were there. There were about 3000 men on the roof and they were watching Samson and poking fun with him. Now this is similar to our world’s disrespect to our Redeemer. Then Samson prayed to the Lord; ‘Sovereign Lord, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me once more that I may pay back the Philistines for the loss of my eyes.’ With that, he wrapped both his arms on the centre pillars of the temple and pushed with all his might against them. His right arm around the pillar of the law and his left hand around the pillar of sin. ‘Let me die with the Philistines,’ he prayed. The temple crashed down on the Philistine leaders and all the people with them. So he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime. Our Lord’s death procured the death of our entire world. The old man with all its sin is crucified with Christ, and that is the situation today. Our Lord Jesus died with the old creation to procure our redemption. Dagon was the god of the old creation, but it ended and he is wounded. We are freed from the old. Today it seems that the world reached the ebb of their existence, as previously God did intervene with our world. Previously He made the fire rain down on Sodom and Gomorrah, and the same fire devoured Elijah’s offering, but today He is quiet, and we have no proof of His existence. To us that is not true as quietly we are at the pinnacle of God’s redemptive work on earth. The believers today, or the Church, will reveal His great glory, when Christ appears on earth. Later his brothers and his other relatives went down to fetch his body. They took him back home and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol. They buried him at the same place he was born, and their plight did not end as the story ended on the same note as it started. Some may query and ask what was accomplished by the 2000 years of Christendom? We continue to live between Zorah and Eshtaol and even if

we are tied by the many ropes, we are free indeed. Our Lord did accomplish the greatest possible victory, and we witnessed it. ‘But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.’ Gal. 6:14, 15. We do not boast in the flesh but in the cross; the world is crucified, and it died at the cross. The keenness of the world is gone as it is crucified, and only the new covenant remains. The decree of both sin and the law did end for us as it is nailed and crucified, and similarly me to the world. The world does not know us, and we are not deemed by the world. Throughout our 5th dispensation, God will perform His greatest miracle on earth and the honour is His Church. He accepts both the meekest and the greatest of sinners, placing them in heaven as co-heirs with Christ

Judges 17

I must warn you – the following 35 pages are engrossed with the question of Ephraim and Micah!
It is easy to notice that from now on the Book of Judges changes dramatically. There is hardly any mention of a judge, and the remaining chapters articulate greater truths concerning our time of waiting. It conveys the dispensation of the Church or the days of the 11, the time until the rapture of the Church leading to the fulfilment of the 12. Throughout this history, there is no mention of a king. To fully express the time of our waiting is difficult, and that is the reason why the following few chapters are so complex.

Why is Ephraim Is Central

The significance of the remaining chapters in Judges (17–21) indeed hinges profoundly on Ephraim, serving as the pivotal lens through which to understand the deeper spiritual truths of the Church age (our current dispensation of grace, the "time of waiting" or the "11" leading to the fulfillment of the "12").

God has a plan

The shift in Judges after Gideon's death is stark: No more heroic judges delivering Israel externally; instead, internal chaos, idolatry, and moral decay dominate ("everyone did what was right in his own eyes"). Chapters 17–18 centre on a man from the hill country of Ephraim (Micah's idolatry, Levite priest, stolen teraphim, Danite migration) and end with Dan's apostasy. This isn't coincidental—Ephraim represents the firstborn rights transferred to the second (Joseph's younger son), foreshadowing how God sets aside the "first" (natural Israel/old covenant) to establish the "second/new" (Church/new covenant).

We can tie this to Genesis patterns:

- Firstborn repeatedly given to the second (Abel/Seth over Cain, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Ephraim over Manasseh).
- This culminates in the Last/Second Adam (Christ) over the first (Adam)

Continue

Ephraim's "double portion" (fruitfulness, Deut. 33:17) isn't earthly primacy but heavenly/spiritual inheritance—realized mysteriously in the Church:

- Scattered among Gentiles (like prodigal son among pigs).
- Receiving new covenant blessings first (Samaritans/Church accept Gospel before full Jewish restoration).
- Hidden during "waiting" (dispensation of mystery, Eph. 3:4–6; Col. 1:26–27).

Key Ephraim Themes in Judges 17–21

- Man from Ephraim's mountains → Christ/Church in heavenly places (Eph. 1:3; 2:6); "high" calling, yet amid idolatry (visible church's corruption).
- Idolatry (Micah's ephod, Dan's stolen gods) → Human traditions usurping Christ's headship (Col. 2:8 warning echoed).
- Levite "priest" hired/wandering → False mediation vs. true Melchizedek order (better priesthood, Heb. 7).
- Dan's omission/migration → Judging Church hidden; Dan/Ephraim often paired as "mystery" tribes.
- Civil war/Benjamin near-extinction → Internal strife; remnant preserved (Church as spiritual remnant).

These chapters aren't mere historical footnotes but parables of the Church dispensation: No earthly king (Christ hidden in heaven), scattered firstborn (Ephraim/Church among nations), Ephraim resolves Genesis' firstborn tension: Double portion = heavenly + earthly inheritance through Christ/Church now, fully manifested at return (Israel restored, Church reigning). The "complicated history" conceals/reveals this mystery—visible to believers, obscure to others (as parables, Matt. 13:13).

Without Ephraim as key, the ending feels disjointed moral decay. With it, it's profound: God’s "second" plan (grace, Church, hidden kingdom) triumphs over

Only a few people do venture to study them.

Chapter 17 commences with the words: there was a man from Ephraim. Any parable beginning with the words ‘there was a man’ usually denotes the Lord Jesus or the promised Messiah. Figuratively speaking, we will discover that the ‘man’ is indeed Christ, and if there is a mountain, it portrays His kingdom.

Both the ‘man’ and the ‘mountain’ in that chapter portray the kingdom of the ‘Man,’ who is none other than Christ Himself. Many times in the Bible the mountains are mentioned as Mount Carmel, Olives or Mount Zion. The highest possible mountain is in the heavens and then we have to do with the heavenly kingdom. We often read of the Lord going to the mountains to pray, and that portrays the time when Christ’s kingdom will be in heaven and not on earth. When our Lord prayed on the mountain, He portrayed His High Priestly task for us in heaven. He now intercedes for us, while we are drifting on a boat amongst the roaring waters (heathen nations). Matt. 14

The ‘man’ did live in the mountains of Ephraim, and now we need to know who Ephraim is. The mountains of Ephraim are frequently mentioned in the Book of Judges. Ephraim is the firstborn, and he is the rightful heir to claim the throne. Early in the Book of Genesis, we read of many discords in the Bible regarding the firstborn rights. The first was between Abel and Cain. One of the first debatable questions in the Bible is the issue of the firstborn rights: should it be given to the first child as Cain? No, that never happened as the title is given to the second child or Abel. It did not go to Abel but to Seth, as Abel was murdered by Cain due to the jealousy that flared up regarding the firstborn rights.

The lineage of Cain ended in the flood, and the lineage of Seth continued after the flood. We have a comparable discord even earlier in the Bible. We may question who the real firstborn is; was it Adam who was created by God in the Garden of Eden? Even though Adam was created on earth, it does not imply that he had the firstborn right on earth. Remember Adam is not the only Adam, and he did not receive the firstborn title but that was given to the second Adam or Christ.

In the New Testament, we read about the second Adam, who is none other than the Lord Jesus who was born at Bethlehem, 4000 years after the first Adam was created. ‘The Scriptures say: The first man, Adam, became a living person, but the last Adam (second Adam) – that is, Christ – is a life-giving Spirit.’ 1 Cor. 15:45 Even though the first Adam was born before the second Adam, it does not imply that he is the older, as the second Adam or Christ is Jehovah, and He lived for all eternity. He was before Adam and the Lord once said: ‘before Abraham was I am’ John 8:58, or He could easily have said: ‘before Adam was I am.’ The Lord was before the earth was created or when there was any mention of the name Adam. The rights of Jehovah exceeded the rights Adam had on earth, and even though God became Man and was born at Bethlehem after Adam, He did exist before him.

Thus the rights of the ‘Last Adam’ exceed the right of the first Adam as He is much older. The first will not be the heir and the problem of the firstborn rights, especially in the Book of Genesis, pivots around this understanding. We who do understand the working of God do appreciate the concept. For that reason, the Patriarchs blessed their sons accordingly, even though many did not understand them. Even Joseph thought Jacob had it wrong when he blessed Ephraim instead of Manasseh his older brother. I will name a few examples of who are the firstborn:

* Noah’s sons were Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and even though Japheth was the oldest, Gen. 10:21 Shem had the firstborn rights.
* Terah the father of Abram had 3 sons namely Nahor, Abram and Haran, but Abram became the firstborn even though he was not the oldest. Gen. 11
* Isaac became the firstborn and not Ishmael his older brother, as Ishmael was sent away with Hagar his mother.
* Jacob had 12 sons and via Joseph, the firstborn rights went to Ephraim. There was a great rivalry amongst the sons of Jacob, and obviously, Joseph was the chosen son as he wore a robe with many colours. The great rivalry between his brothers nearly killed Joseph but instead he was sold as a slave going to Egypt. On the day when Jacob got married, his father-in-law, Laban, bargained with him. He ended marrying Leah instead of Rachel. He was tricked, and he was forced to work another 7 years until he married Rachel, who was the mother of Joseph. Laban who tricked Jacob told him that that was customary amongst them to swap the first with the second. Jacob’s first wife Leah gave birth to Reuben and even though he was the firstborn, he did not attain the firstborn rights. Jacob begrudged Reuben before he died, as he slept with one of his wives; he dishonoured him. All along Jacob knew Reuben had an affair but only when he blessed his sons did he mention it. Gen. 49:3-4 Jacob had 12 sons and Reuben knew that there had to be a 13th son, and quietly he tried to foster the 13th son for Jacob. Jacob was infertile, so Reuben thought he had the duty to attain the 13th son. In the end, Jacob endowed the firstborn rights to Joseph, and he was the first son of his second wife Rachel, the wife he originally planned to marry. The firstborn rights did not go to Leah or to any of her descendants but instead to Rachel and her sons. Jacob had 12 sons and with his death, he never wanted to scatter them, as he desired to unite them as a nation dedicated to God. If, amongst them, there had to be a kingdom it would sprout from the tribe of Judah, and the priesthood would be entrusted to the tribe of Levi. Now we are left with one big question. The firstborn rights were given to Joseph, but he was entrusted with nothing, as both the priesthood and the kingship went to the tribes of Levi and Judah. The firstborn had to be both kings and priests unto God and why not here? By right Ephraim should have received the firstborn rights or the double heritage, and that included the kingdom with the priesthood. We will discover that Ephraim will receive the firstborn rights at a far grander scale. Jacob had 12 sons and his heritage was divided into 13 portions, but to the firstborn is entrusted a double portion. Ephraim counted for two. In the history of Jacob, the 13th had a great significance. The 13th child of Jacob was a girl, and she was named Dinah, or Dan, who was one of Jacob’s 12 sons. There was no 13th son and Reuben knew there had to be one, as they needed to be bonded by the 13th. The numerical value of the letter 1 is 13. Reuben endeavoured to do the things his own way and he wanted to raise a child from one of Jacob’s wives. Sadly he never knew that one of the 12 would create the 13th via his 2 sons. It says: 'But he shall acknowledge the firstborn …. by giving him a double portion of all that he has for he is the

beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the firstborn. ' Deut. 21:17 The right of the firstborn is to have a double part.
Joseph had two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasseh means ‘to forget’ and the firstborn right from Joseph was not transferred to him, but to his younger brother Ephraim. His name means ‘a double fruit.’ The firstborn right is given to Joseph, the first son of Jacob’s second wife and to Ephraim, who is Joseph’s second son. The burning question remains what is the meaning of the firstborn right and why the commotion? How will it benefit both Joseph and Ephraim? They received a double share but of what? The complete Book of Genesis is absorbed about that question, but later in the Bible its importance seemed to have died out. We will outline its significance.
∗ King David was the rightful king and King Solomon followed him. With Solomon’s death Rehoboam became king. Sadly the kingdom did split, and the 10 tribes of Israel followed Jeroboam his rival. The reason is that they feared Rehoboam thinking he would continue to tax them heavily – as previously his father Solomon did. Jeroboam and the people promised their loyalty to Rehoboam if he burdened them less. Rehoboam had no sympathy, and he replied saying he would tax them even more. That caused a great rift and then the 10 tribes of Israel decided to be ruled by Jeroboam. The two tribes namely Judah and Benjamin remained with Rehoboam. Jeroboam was born from the tribe of Ephraim and Rehoboam from Judah. Unquestionably, the official king was Rehoboam and if we amended the question and ask who the real firstborn of Israel is; then we need to favour Jeroboam. The name Israel needs to be coupled with the 10 tribes of Israel and not the two tribes of Israel. The real firstborn will inherit the title as they are the true Israelites, and not king Rehoboam who was born from Judah. Amongst the tribes, there was a constant discord and that rift remained ever since Rehoboam’s advisers died. King Rehoboam sent out Adoniram, who was in charge of the forced labour, but all of Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam, however, managed to get into his chariot, and he escaped to Jerusalem. So to that day Israel had been in rebellion against the house of David. 1 Ki. 12:18-19 In that debate, the 10 tribes are known by the name Israel, and Rehoboam was known as the house of David or the Jewish nation. A few verses later there is mention of the hill country of Ephraim. There Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and he lived there. 1 Ki. 12:25 Shechem portrays the Church and the name Ephraim is coupled with both Ephraim and Shechem. To recap the kingship was entrusted to the tribe of Judah and after the splitting of the kingdoms, they only ruled themselves and the tribe of Benjamin. The ten tribes had the firstborn rights, and they were known as the Israelites. The Levites had no other task than being priests, and they were spread amongst all the other nations of the world. During the time of Joshua when the land of Israel was divided according to the 12 tribes of Israel, the tribe of Levi is not mentioned, but both Manasseh and Ephraim are named. There were 13 tribes, but whenever they were called, one tribe is missing, as each time only 12 were named. We may reason the Jews today have no right to use the name Israel, as the name is tied to the 10 lost tribes, who did reign until the year 722 BC,

when they disappeared in the Assyrian captivity. Officially, they did not return but it did not spell their end as some did return to Israel. Previously Samaria was their capital and that place is mentioned frequently in the New Testament. Legitimately, their kingdom ended 2700 years ago, and we may ask what happened to their often-mentioned firstborn rights? It is wrong to assume that all their ambitions ended when Rehoboam became king and after all, what happened to their heritage? For a short time the heritage of the 10 tribes including the name Israel went to the 2 tribes of Israel. The name of Israel was entrusted to the closest family or Judah. After the 10 tribes were led captive the name Israel would remain with the 2 tribes – until the 10 tribes do surface. The 10 tribes are lost and taken captive, but that does not spell their end. God made many promises with regard to the 10 lost tribes, and at present for the average reader, all their hopes seemed to have vanished. Did the firstborn rights of Ephraim disappear once they left Rehoboam? When we do study the man on the mountains of Ephraim, we need to appreciate that he addresses the firstborn rights of Ephraim, and to many that is an awkward question. By rights, Ephraim will receive twice as much, more than Judah and Levi put together. It says with Joseph's birth: 'Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach." So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The Lord shall add to me another son."' Gen. 30:22-24 In Hebrew, the name Joseph means 'Jehovah will add' and remarkably the firstborn right was added to him, as he received a double portion. Similarly, the name Levi has a parallel meaning to the name Joseph, as in the Hebrew language the name Levi implies 'to bring together' or 'to be redeemed.' The two parties were joined to each other, and they became one. Levi epitomises the priesthood of Moses and Joseph having the 'double part' the High Priesthood of Melchizedek. Much later from a different Joseph, who came from Nazareth, is born the Lord Jesus. Simply in the name Joseph, we tie the notion of our redemption. Via the firstborn we are tied to the Lord Jesus and the question is how? And to Joseph were born two sons and the first was named Manasseh: 'For God has made me forget all my toil I had in my father's house.' And the name of the second he called Ephraim: 'For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.' Gen. 41:50-52 Jacob accepted the two sons of Joseph as though they were his own sons. Shortly before Jacob died, he made sure he first blessed both Ephraim and Manasseh, Gen. 48 and afterwards he blessed his own sons. Gen. 49 'And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are mine.' Gen. 48:5 Jacob initially named Ephraim and then Manasseh, who was the eldest of the two. Jacob was blind, and he crossed both his arms. He blessed Ephraim by placing his right hand on his head and his left hand on Manasseh. Joseph was aware of Jacob crossing his hands as he thought Manasseh needed the special blessing as he was on his right side. Jacob knew all along whom he wanted to bless, as he knew about the significance of the second. He merely acted in faith. Heb. 11:21 'But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was

the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. He blessed Joseph . . . . . .’ When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him, and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. Joseph said to his father, ‘Not so, my father, for that one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head.’ But his father refused and said, ‘I know, my son, I know. . . . . Thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh. Gen. 48:14-21 The second epitomises the second Adam, and we need to be familiar with the idea that the first conveys the things coupled to the old creation and the second does picture the new creation in Christ. It is not the ‘old or the natural man’ who will inherit, but the reborn man in Christ. Our Lord told Nicodemus to be born again to be part of the new covenant in Christ, as the old will not suffice. To substantiate the importance of Ephraim, I wish to quote a few verses in the Bible.

* Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh; and they together shall be against Judah. Isa. 9:21 Manasseh, Ephraim, is another name for Joseph, and it has no other possible meaning. There will be a constant rivalry between them, as Judah’s greatest enemies used to be the tribe of Ephraim. Here we find a divide between the 2 and the 10 tribes. The 10 tribes used to be known as the northern kingdom, and when the Book of Isaiah was written, the divide already existed, and that continues until today.
* Isaiah 11 commences with a Kingdom that will sprout from a new shoot or a branch, and the branch is the ‘old root of Jesse’ that will bear fruit. v. 1 Jesse was the father of King David, and Christ is the ‘new Branch.’ Now we may question if the kingdom only involves David and not Joseph; will it remain with the 2 tribes or will it later engross Ephraim? Few verses later we do read about the banner who is Christ Himself. In the future on the ‘day of the Lord,’ our Lord will reach out his hand a second time, and He will reclaim the remnant that were scattered from the previous Assyria exile, and from all the islands of the sea. Christ will be the raised banner and all the exiles of Israel will gather, including the scattered people from Judah. They too are dispersed to the four corners of the earth. Then at last the jealousy between Israel and Judah will end. They will end fighting each other. v11-13 The rivalry between Ephraim and Judah will end, when they do understand the real implications of the firstborn. Previously Judah was known by the name Israel, but the title of Israel will be returned to Ephraim. In that chapter, the 10 lost tribes are known as Israel. The rivalry for the name Israel will end but remember the Messiah was born from Judah. The firstborn right caused the envy and Judah thought they deserved the title with all its entitlements. I believe a parable in the New Testament does mention this rivalry. It is the parable of the two sons as their background etches both the tribe Ephraim and Judah. The one son who left his father and spilled his inheritance portrays Ephraim, and the other son who remained faithfully with his father portrays Judah. The prodigal son lost everything, and he squandered much of his time attending to the pigs. When he decided to return to his father, his father

whole-heartedly accepted him. The other son felt embittered as his father dressed him with the finest robe, and he even killed the calf that was fattened in the pen. His father was cheerful as his son was dead, and now he returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found. Luke 15 The other son who remained with his father is Judah, and he was steeped in the laws of Moses, and finally he snubbed his brother. He sulked and refused to enjoy the feast his father did prepare for his former lost brother. With the repentance of the prodigal son, he was blessed with the blessings of the new covenant and thus the mentioning of the words as joy, the finest robe, and ‘he was dead, and now he is alive.’

∗ Jeremiah spoke earnestly to the people of Judah warning them that their wonderful possession that was reserved for them would slip away from their fingers. God would allow them to be taken captive to a foreign land. This is what the Lord says: Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from the Lord. I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brethren or the 10 tribes of Israel. 17:4,5 The Lord will not be alarmed by all the troubles Judah experiences, and the fate that once struck the 10 lost tribes will also plague Judah. They will pray to Jehovah in heaven, but the Lord will not listen to their prayers as they did that grudgingly. The difference between the 2 and the 10 tribes is that the 10 tribes did go into captivity, and they never returned, but the 2 lost tribes did return from the Babylonian captivity; only for a short time to be later led into the Egyptian captivity. The reason is to allow the birth of our Lord Jesus at Bethlehem. The libraries that noted all the ancestors leading to Christ ended with His resurrection, as He would be the last rightful king on earth. Since then the great temple and all their libraries got burned down, and the Jews were taken captive. As from then they had no record of their ancestors. The father of the Lord Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, and he is named Joseph, making us think of the previous Joseph in Egypt?

∗ Jeremiah 31 ‘Again you will plant your vineyards on the mountains of Samaria and eat from your own gardens there. The day will come when watchmen will shout from the hill country of Ephraim, "Come, let us go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord our God. "’ 5-7 This chapter relates to the promises of the new covenant that is secured in both the houses of Judah and Israel. Christ will be their King and High Priest, and we may question the importance of the firstborn right and what does it entail? Verse 7 mentions Israel that will be gathered, and verse 2 says they are the people who survived the sword of the great tribulation. They found grace in the wilderness. Those who were ‘left of the sword’ or who did not get killed, found grace, and grace is an attribute of the new covenant. In the future, all the 12 tribes of Israel will be gathered at Petra, which is located in the wilderness. Verse 5 mentions the mountains of Samaria as they are an enclave to Israel or the 10 lost tribes. When Israel says: v. 6 ‘let us arise and go to Zion,’ is comparable to the words of the prodigal son who returned to his father. Ephraim is the lost son and the Lord will guard His remnant. Our Lord will bring them from the north and the distant corners of the earth. He will not forget the blind and the lame, the expectant mothers and women who are about to give birth. A great company will

return! v8 They will follow the well-known route from Petra to Jerusalem v9 and again it is reiterated that Ephraim is His firstborn. With the return of the Lord, the real firstborn will be acknowledged, and then it will become evident how all the blessings are procured in Christ – and they are the much talked about blessings of firstborn. Christ is the real Firstborn, and we as the Church do share in the blessings of the firstborn. We are part of both heaven and earth.

With our Christ's second coming to earth things will change as the privileges of the firstborn right are set aside for the Church. The duties of the Levites were annulled once Christ became the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. With Christ's return to earth, the firstborn right of Ephraim will be nullified. Ephraim did bemoan himself. Ephraim was heard saying, 'You disciplined me severely, like a calf that needs training for the yoke. Turn me again to you and restore me, for you alone are the Lord my God. ' v. 18 Ephraim was ignorant that he lost his firstborn right and later it says: 'Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For though I spoke against him, I earnestly remember him still; therefore My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, says the Lord.' v. 20

∗ Ezekiel 37 'As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: "For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions. " Then take another stick and write on it, "For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions. " Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand. And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, "Will you not show us what you mean by these?"—say to them, "Thus says the Lord God: Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand. "' 16-19 Both the tribes of Judah and Ephraim will amalgamate. Christ will bond them as one nation living in Israel. The true king of heaven will rule over them and no longer will they be split into two nations. They will return to Israel, and Christ will cleanse them, and save them from their previous sin. Truly, then they will be called by His name, and the son of David or Christ will be their king, having only one Shepherd. They and their children and their grandchildren will live forever in Israel, from one generation to the next. If we trust the Lord and agree that He will gather Judah or the 2 tribes of Israel, we need to trust Him all the more. His plan is more immense as He will gather the 10 lost tribes of Israel, even after their 2700 years of exile. Then the new covenant will commence, and their final unity will never be severed. The previous rift between the tribes will be healed by none other than Christ Himself. We may still be puzzled thinking what happened to the firstborn right? We are acquainted with the kingship and the priesthood, but we will discover that the niggling issue concerning the firstborn right of Ephraim is simple. It is procured during the time of God's mystery, and that is settled since Christ rose from the dead. Unnoticed to them that notable blessing is bestowed on us during the time of the Church, as we are blessed having a home in heaven. The firstborn right is part of God's mystery and the burning question in the Book of Genesis; the one we continually stumbled upon, is easily resolved

once we understand the mysteries of His plan. It corresponds to the time of the Church and whatever Christ achieved in us. It is His ultimate plan. The Kingdom of Christ is well known to us, and every parable in the Bible does speak of our time. ‘That is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.’ Matt. 13:13 Merely the true believers in Christ will understand the complexities. To any who disregard Christ’s claims the parables will remain obscure. The parables are to conceal the truths to those who reject them. Since the Jews rejected the Gospel, it will be entrusted to the heathen nations. ‘He will speak to a people whose heart has grown dull, and whose ears can barely hear. Their eyes are closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’ Matt. 13:15 As a nation, the Jews did not accept Christ, and they will never appreciate the implications of the firstborn rights of Ephraim. The heathen will readily accept the Words our Lord spoke to them, the time when he sat in a ship confronting the people. Via the parables the simple examples like sowing the seeds will open our eyes to understand the deeper connotations. The Lord did mention the time of God’s mystery, and it will end in the Book of Revelation, ch. 11 before the people do enter the Millennium. Once they crucified our Lord, there was no communiqué between them and Him, as He turned his face to the side. Isa. 53:3 The prophets of the Old Testament had a burning question within them, and they questioned what the Spirit of Christ was talking about, when He told them in advance about Christ's suffering and His great glory afterward. They wondered when and in whom all the promises would be fulfilled, and at what time. 1 Pet. 1:11 Obviously they concern our time of waiting lasting nearly 2000 years. God taught the Apostle Paul, and he confirmed his message came from Christ himself. Gal. 1:12 No-one else taught him about our times. Even Peter relied on the special disclosure Paul had with God. In the last chapter of the Apostle Peter, he told his readers they need to heed Paul’s teachings, as he is acquainted with the truths of our time. 2 Pet. 3:15, 16 By right all the promises of the Old Testament will be endowed on us, as each promise has a heavenly perspective. We have a double portion and our home is in heaven, and from there we will rule the world. The heaven is higher than the earth, and our blessings exceed the best our world can offer. The heavens rule the world and the world will never rule the heavens. We are blessed with a heavenly calling and an earthly blessing will always go along with it. Our Lord is not here but in heaven. He has the power to equip us for heaven, and it says clearly that we are His firstborn. Heb. 12:23

Hebrews 12 commences with a debate about the firstborn, mentioning Esau who is called a fornicator or profane person, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. v. 16 If we are disloyal and scorn our firstborn right as Esau we will bear the consequences as he tossed his for something cheap. Later he regretted it, as he did not realise its worth. We must not be as irresponsible as Esau, who for the sake of a short-lived bliss wasted his blessings. We may ask what the firstborn rights of Esau were? The answer is he lived for the present, and he had no concern for the future, or

what it entails. When his physical powers waned, he regretted the reckless decision he once made regarding his calling. He was like an empty vessel and his life was wasted. v. 17 In contrast, Abraham lived for the future, and he hailed the promise he received from God, knowing he would be resurrected from the dead. Simply put Esau valued his earthly privileges more than his latter calling, and it's easy to undervalue our real heritage – thinking that our world will satisfy all our cravings. We have a far greater future than any Old Testament believer and even greater than Abraham, and we need to value this. Paul says he presses to reach the end of the race and to receive the prize of his high calling of God in Christ. Phil. 3:14 We do not challenge a touchable mountain with a flaming fire, or the darkness and gloom with a whirlwind, as the Israelites did at Mount Sinai when God gave them His laws. v. 18 That mountain epitomises death, but our future is at Mount Zion. Yes, we have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels unified in a joyful assembly, to the Church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men. v. 22-23 In short Moses conveys the truths regarding the old covenant and Christ the truths regarding the new covenant, and our thoughts need to converge on Him alone. As Moses was a prophet of the old, Christ is a prophet of the new covenant, and He will lead us to the better promises. Our promises are hidden, and it remains unnoticed to the world. We need to reflect the importance of the firstborn rights in the Old Testament, as it has a far greater spiritual connotation. That is the reason for all the parables, as we need to probe for the deeper underlying truths. Mount Zion is allied to the new covenant, and whatever happened on the Mount portrays our dispensation. It is a city of the living God; or the New Jerusalem that will descend from heaven to earth. Everything we can see or touch with our hands will be shaken to the ground and vanish, but the things we cannot see will remain. v. 27 Our temple is not on earth but in heaven and the promises we have are not for today. We need to be patient. Firstly the promises of the Old Testament were fulfilled in a literal manner, and because of this we are skilled and have the insight to add the extra dimension, or the spiritual the world cannot see: We can grasp the real fulfilment of each Scripture. There is a Jerusalem on earth and our feelings are not towards that city, but rather our minds need to be occupied with the Jerusalem in heaven. It is not touchable. The Bible encourages us to study its pages and to distinguish their different settings. We can spiritualise the prophecies as they have a typological implication. The problem of most theologians is to merely spiritualise Israel, thinking there will never be a real Israel or a Millennium on earth. They think Jerusalem on earth is lifeless as all their aspirations ended in the Church. It's true there is a spiritual Israel and Jerusalem, but don't disregard the earthly perspective, as with Christ's return, there will be a literal fulfilment of them. As for now we are engrossed with the promises of the New Jerusalem in heaven but once the Church is complete, there will be a literal Jerusalem and a temple on earth. The joyful assembly is the Church v. 22 and we have a juridical duty as we will judge the world

with Christ. Whatever happened to the Lord Jesus will happen to us; yes we are totally part
■ of His faith on earth,
■ of His walk on earth,
■ of His death and resurrection
■ and with His ascension into heaven.

We will share all His duties when He judges the world and the angels. ‘Christ is our High Priest and He is chosen from among men to benefit us, in matters pertaining to God.’ Heb. 5:1
He is the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek and the real firstborn. Christ will make us skilful, as we will share His duties, being the real firstborn with Him. Our names are already engraved in heaven, and we are its rightful citizens. That happened with our rebirth when we accepted Christ. We will judge the world, and when we ponder that, we need to think of the tribe of Dan, as in Hebrew his name is translated as ‘a judge’. Dan and Ephraim as the firstborn seem to go hand in hand.
Judges 17 commences with Ephraim, but the next chapter ends with Dan. The priestly duties were robbed by the tribe of Dan as they are part of Ephraim. Together they are the Church and, as the firstborn, they will judge the world with Christ.
We approach the Mediator of the new covenant and He is both our King and High Priest, and we are one plant with Him. That is the reason why we are the real firstborn with Christ. We need to be diligent, and we must not be careless as Esau, who squandered his privileges. We need to seek the things which are above, or in heaven, and not a plate of lentil soup!
By right, we received the title as that is not dependent on our birth on earth, but because we are born again, or born a second time in heaven. God only deals with the new creation or the second Adam, since the old creation or the first Adam will be made redundant. Once we understand this, we will understand the book of Genesis, and why the firstborn rights are given to the second and not to the first child.
Long ago, even before He made the world, God loved us, and He chose us in Christ. Eph. 1:4 It was a long time before Adam was born or the birth of Israel; yes, then we were chosen in Christ. The Church is hidden in Christ, and since we share in all His blessings, we need to acquaint ourselves with Him. Paul prays that our hearts may be flooded with His light to enable us to understand the manifold riches we do share with Him. We need to appreciate our glorious inheritance. Eph. 1:18 Later he says in the book of Philippians that the real meaning of our lives on earth is to be acquainted with Him, and then we will understand our inner self. All the chapters of our Bible articulate the truths concerning our Lord, and our blessings in Christ.
Christ is the image of the invisible God, and the firstborn of the new creation. Col. 1:15 The old is tiresome and fleeting, but the new covenant is eternal.
John said the Lord Jesus came unto His own, and His own did not receive Him, and it includes Israel. However, the people who did receive Him, He blessed to be called the sons of God. The Church was the first to accept

Christ, and after the rapture of the Church it will be Israel, followed by the remaining nations of the world.
Today we are the ‘spiritual Israel’ as the two tribes of Israel rejected Him, and the ten tribes of Israel are scattered amongst the heathen people. The Church received the firstborn rights before Israel. It says the Lord came unto His own (2 tribes of Israel), and they did not receive Him, but as many as did receive Him (10 lost tribes) He gave the power to be His sons. The ten lost tribes of Israel are the Samaritans and, as the woman at the well, they did accept Christ.
The Church did attain the blessings before Judah. The 10 tribes are scattered amongst all the tribes of the world, and they will bear fruit. The Bible gives no clue where to place the 10 lost tribes, but they are somewhere, since Christ promised they will return.
We need to answer who is Israel and did they receive Christ? Yes, they did, as the 10 lost tribes are scattered amongst all the other countries of the world. Wherever they are found, there will be a harvest, even though the yield may be small.
Throughout the time of Christ, we can trace the tribe of Judah, but not the 10 lost tribes as they were dispersed amongst the nations. The Church did accept Christ, and that includes the 10 lost tribes of Israel, and indirectly they are blessed being the principal part of the Church.
Israel will surface, and the 10 tribes are hidden in the Church, and after the rapture of the Church, then each of the 12 tribes of Israel will be branded as the real Israelites on earth, before entering the Millennium.
Now in the place of the Jews the Church is called to be the real firstborn. The Church is blessed above Judah, and I believe the 10 tribes are now sheltered in the Church. Today, Judah or the Jews are scattered in the Egyptian exile, similar to the 10 tribes in an earlier Assyrian exile. Ephraim is dispersed, and the name of Israel is now with Judah.
Now the Church is favoured above Judah as they used to be the prodigal son. The son who remained with the father is Judah, and his jealousy did not favour him. Judah is ignorant that the 10 lost tribes will re-emerge as the prodigal son that is found.
Unbeknown to mainstream Christianity, the 10 lost tribes of Israel portray the Church and officially we do not know where on earth they are scattered. As the lost prodigal son, they live amongst the heathen in a faraway country. Never ever did any of their kings belonging to the 10 tribes of Israel do any good in the eyes of God. They were doomed from the time they left Rehoboam, but in the end God favoured them, having no hope or future. Eph. 2:12 The Church is as the son who woke from their sleep to return to His father. Amongst them are the real Israelites who are deemed as the heathen. The people who did accept Him, either from the 10 or the 2 tribes of Israel or the heathen, have the power to be called the sons of God. – Today that truth is realised in the spiritual temple and not in the physical temple. Many theologians today will argue that every blessing in the Bible is locked away in the Church, and we need to disregard the blessings that were promised to natural Israel. They believe all their expectations are doomed. Their general rule is besides the Church, there is no Israel.

Today the firstborn right of Ephraim is invested in the Church, but that is not the end. Today Christ is ridiculed by Judah, but widely received by the nations wherever the 10 lost tribes hid. We can reason that the firstborn right of the Church is embodied by the often cited firstborn rights of Ephraim, and it exceeds the prospects of natural Judah or the future reborn Israel by far. The Gospel of Christ was originally accepted by Ephraim or the Samaritans, and they maintained the evangelisation of the world. [UK spelling: evangelization → evangelisation]

In the parable of the prodigal son, the other son was angered as he vindicated himself. He portrays the Pharisees who were steeped in their religious practices. Later they grumbled and accused our Lord of eating with sinners. When the prodigal son returned, great joy accompanied him and his older brother who remained with his father was torn by jealousy. Luke 15 His jealousy clashed with the joy in heaven! The words ‘there is joy in the presence of God's angels even when one sinner repents’ are all terms reminiscent of the new covenant or the Gospel. We were all like sheep going astray, and once we return, there will be great joy in heaven. That must be read in the context of the 10 lost tribes, who epitomise the first and foremost blessings of the new covenant. [UK spelling: epitomize → epitomise]

Since Jeroboam left Jerusalem to distance himself from Rehoboam, he established his kingdom at Shechem; and he with all the succeeding kings never obeyed the Lord. They were as the son who squandered everything, but they did heed the voice of the Gospel. By obeying Him, they unknowingly became part of the blessings that are linked with the firstborn. We may ask if the lost son was the Church or Ephraim? I find no need to differentiate them as they are identical.

Today we can question where the message of Christ settled? Was it mainland Asia, Europe or America? Unmistakably it is NW Europe and especially the British Isles that endeavoured to remain faithful to God’s Word. They are the Anglo-Saxon nations or wherever they emigrated to, such as New Zealand. The message went literally to the four corners of the world and from those countries they supported it. They sowed the seed, and it will bear much fruit. The words Anglo-Saxon are two words, namely Anglo, meaning ‘a corner’ as they will invade the corners of the world, and Saxon meaning the covenant people, and to ascertain which covenant is difficult. I am sure that is the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or the new covenant that circumvented the laws of Moses. Saxon could also mean the sons of Isaac. It is difficult to prove, but it is the most obvious explanation.

The Church has a double share, and our inheritance involves both heaven and the earth.

Previously that great inheritance was sheltered under the epitome of ‘the firstborn rights of Ephraim’. The Old Testament prophets never had the idea that it would implicate the heavens as well. We have that privileged position and some Jewish Christians believe that they are the 13th tribe, and they are ever so close to the truth. The 13th disciple is the Apostle Paul, as he is the one who caused the uproar, as he explained the old (Old Testament) to disclose the truths of the new covenant. If we consider the

sons of Jacob, we do agree that Manasseh is the 12th son and Ephraim the 13th. Reuben's efforts to procure the 13th failed, as God had a different plan.
It says while Jacob was alive, Reuben went in and slept with his concubine Bilhah, and Israel (Jacob) was aware of that. Jacob had twelve sons. Gen. 35:22
In the same breath or in the same verse it reiterated that Jacob only had 12 sons, and Reuben's mission was pointless. Lawfully if Bilhah had another son via Reuben, it would have been Jacob's 13th son.
Joseph's second son, Ephraim, became the 13th as he portrays the Church.
With Christ's resurrection, Judas died leaving only 11 disciples, and they had to get the 12th disciple. Strangely when they nominated two men, it was Joseph and Matthias. Acts 1:23 Joseph who is called Barabbas was a contender and the 13th as he was not chosen. I believe that somehow later Joseph is tied with Paul, who is regarded as the 13th disciple. He caused the turmoil as he had a special relationship with the Lord. Paul said he did not learn anything from the 12 disciples, and he never went to Jerusalem to speak to any of them – besides, he had a special relationship with Christ and to him the truths of our dispensation were disclosed. Gal. 1:12

We may question why the 13 is important?
The 13th will secure the unity to allow the harmony amongst the tribes of Israel. The 12 sons of Jacob were always apprehensive as they continually searched for the 13th. It is an accord that cannot be torn apart. There had to be unity and the 12 will not attain the unity. Reuben failed to procure that, but via Joseph, one of Jacob's grandsons became the 13th.
Whenever the 12 tribes of Israel were counted – there always seems to be one of the 13 tribes missing. In the book of Revelation, the 12 tribes are summarised, and the tribe of Dan is not named. We will find that there is always a reason why certain tribes are not mentioned. I believe Dan is missing as he is the 'tribe' portraying the Church during our time of the mystery. The 'one' that is omitted is regarded as the 13th and usually in the Bible both Dan and Ephraim are mentioned together. Via the new covenant the 13th will accomplish the unity and not the old covenant (12) that caused great disputes. There used to be discord but now there is unity as we are 'one plant' with Christ. The Church can be regarded as the 13th as via Ephraim we share in the blessings of the 13th. We with Christ were born from another Joseph at Bethlehem. Paul is also a type of Christ and we ought to be followers of Him.
He preached the true unity or the greater truths of the new covenant.
* The 12 disciples were obedient to our Lord Jesus, and later the same 12 disciples were submissive to Paul, who caused the stir and the unity. Paul told them to follow his example, as he followed the example of Christ. 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17 Christ and the Apostle Paul caused the revolution, and certainly they did, getting rid of the old. That 'turning around of things' by the 13th signifies our rebirth and in Hebrew it is translated as Gilgal. Our dualistic world is branded by the two and when

the two (man and wife) unite, it creates the ‘one’ as the birth of the child is part of a new generation. If today there is any unity, they deem it as bad luck. The reason is that the number 13 is usually viewed with great superstition.
In Hebrew the word for one is 'achad' and it has a numerical value of 13 (1+8+4=13).
In the Great Seal of the United States, there are 13 olive leaves (with 13 olives), 13 arrows, and 13 stars. They form a triangle over the eagle with the number 13 on each point. On the reverse, the pyramid has 13 levels.
If we study a one-dollar note and look at the eagle, you will notice that the stars above the eagle's head are the six-point Star of David, to honour the Jews.
If you turn the eagle upside down, you will see a configuration in the likeness of a Menorah . . . . George Washington had the idea and he said we should never forget the Jewish people and what they did in the interest of America. I am convinced that the forefathers of America were familiar with the significance of the number 13. Judah or the Jews are sheltered by Joseph’s sons, and many believe Manasseh lives mostly in North America.
∗ Ezekiel 34 - There were many false prophets or shepherds who deceived the people of Israel, and in this chapter they are equated to the false prophets' or the religious leaders of the day. Ezekiel warned the people that their leaders are the shepherds, who harm and slay the flock.
Later we do read of the shepherds that tended to the sheep and at night they saw a great light. The angel of the Lord appeared to them; someone having the radiance of the Lord's glory, and he told them the good news of our Lord's birth. Luke 2:8-10
The Messiah was born at Ephrathah. ‘But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.’ Micah 5:2 - In the Hebrew language, Ephrathah means ‘fruitfulness’ and it is linked with the word Ephraim. When our Lord was born, He was tied to both Ephraim and Joseph. Moreover, Rachel the mother of Joseph used to be a shepherdess, and she was buried at Ephrathah, after she gave birth to Benjamin. Gen. 35 The climax of the love affair between Boaz and Ruth was at Ephrathah, at the threshing floor. Their son Obed was the grandfather of King David. Ruth 4:11-17 The false prophets were careless, and they abandoned the sheep. The shepherds at Ephrathah portray the Lord, who is the ‘great Shepherd’ who will lead the flock, and they will never be scattered. As surely as I live, says the Sovereign Lord (the resurrected Christ), you abandoned my flock and left them to be attacked by every wild animal. Even though you were my shepherds, you didn't search for my sheep when they were lost. You took care of yourselves and left the sheep to starve. v. 8 The Pharisees were not troubled about the wellbeing of the sheep and their time in power ended tragically with the Egyptian exile.
That is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against the shepherds, and I will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them. Our Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep, and I will look after them.

As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. vv. 10-12
I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. v. 23
The one Shepherd is the true son of David. David was also a shepherd and the rift that used to split the 2 and the 10 tribes will be healed, and they will be reunited as one flock. The one is Judah, and the other is Israel. The Son of David is Christ and He is none other than Jehovah Himself.
The good Shepherd is the Lord of the New Testament. He will procure the covenant of peace with all the tribes of Israel, to finally end the jealousy between them. v. 25
Later Ezekiel was told to hold two sticks in his hands. The two sticks epitomised the 2 and the 10 lost tribes, but they will become one nation. [UK spelling: epitomized → epitomised]
Later it says that His servant David will be king over them, and they will have one Shepherd. A unified nation will be ruled by one King, and no longer will there be a divide amongst them. They will literally live in the Israel of old and there will be an everlasting covenant with their God. vv. 22-27 His Tabernacle will be amongst them.
Ezekiel chapters 34 and 37 are often quoted in the New Testament as in John 10 and Ephesians 2. The tabernacle is the Lord Himself. John said: Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. Rev. 21:3
As the tabernacle accompanied Israel in the desert, similarly our Lord will be in their midst.
In John 1:14 it literally says: And the Word became flesh, and He did tabernacle among us, meaning He dwelt amongst the people. John 10:8 says that the shepherds are thieves and intend to harm the flock. The thief's aim is to steal, kill and destroy. Our Lord did come that we may have life, and have it more abundantly. He is the good Shepherd that gives His life for the sheep. A hireling is not a true shepherd, as he does not own the sheep. When he sees the wolf coming, he flees and leaves the sheep to fend for themselves. The wolf catches the sheep and scatters them apart. The hireling flees and does not care about the sheep. Our Lord is the good Shepherd, and He knows His sheep, and the sheep know Him. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.
Then we read about the other sheep who may be the lost tribes of Israel: And other sheep I have which are not of that fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice, and there will be one flock and one Shepherd. John 10:16
Christ came down to us to give us life, and He is the good Shepherd from Ezekiel 34. He is the real Moses or David, as He exceeds all their expectations. Presently our Lord continues to give His blood (life) for the sheep, and the last wish of any sheep is a dead Shepherd!
‘That great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,’ Heb. 13:20 No one will benefit having a dead high priest; if that happened it would spell disaster for the flock or any nation. Our Lord did

die but since His resurrection He is our living High Priest and our Shepherd. He is alive, and He gives His life for the sheep. When we study Ezekiel 34 and read ‘He gave His life for the sheep’, it doesn’t concern His death but His life since His resurrection. Christ is resurrected and presently He lives to the glory of the Father. Rom. 6:4 Any hireling is only concerned about himself and not the sheep.

In the Gospel of John, the religious leaders argued if they didn’t kill the Lord Jesus, they would end up with no career. John 11:48 Their motives were financial gains. In contrast, the risen Christ knows His sheep, and He is part of them as He is a ‘sheep’ Himself. That portrays Christ as part of the Church as He is the head or the Chief amongst them. A paraplegic body lives, but not a headless body. The notion of the Shepherd, the Head or the High Priest is all similar. Our future is invested in Him alone.

When we study Ezekiel 34, we will find many more hints. We may question why the frequent mention of the ‘other flock’ as He will make them one flock. Christ says that He has other sheep who are not from the flock (Judah) as there are more (10 lost tribes of Israel), and they will hear His voice. What is peculiar is that, interestingly, the mention of the other sheep in Ezekiel 34. They are not from that sheepfold. He will call them and they will obey Him; and there will be one flock having one Shepherd. John 10:16

In the book of Ezekiel, it is easy to conclude that the one flock is Judah and the other flock are the 10 lost tribes of Israel, and they will heed His Word, to be His real firstborn. Ezekiel 37:24 also mentions the 2 and 10 tribes of Israel and the ‘one Shepherd’ who will unite complete Israel. Miraculously the valley full of dead bones will be healed, and flesh will cover them. It will exceed any expectation.

When we study the earlier chapters of the book of John, there are several clues that denote the Church or the 10 lost tribes of Israel. There is a hint of their existence by the words ‘they are the sheep from the other pen’. They do not refer to the gathering of all the 12 tribes of Israel but rather the calling of the Church. He came unto His own and they (the Jews) did not receive Him, but as many as did receive Him (Church) He gave them the power to be called the children of God. The other sheep is the Church, and they will obey His voice and once we understand Ezekiel 34 and 37, we will realise the main message pivots around Ephraim. It is simple as Ephraim is the Church and the spirit of Ephraim is in the Church. The Jews did not take any notice of Him, and they continually argued saying, ‘How can you say that?’

Once they were very puzzled and asked Him, ‘Where will He go that we will not find Him? Will He go to the dispersed (scattered people) among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?’ John 7:35

If the Jews did not find or accept Him, He would not be at Judea but rather He would visit the lost tribes of Israel. Now things haven’t changed as He is now in heaven with the Church, a people from the Gentile nations. Regarding the question of the Jews, ‘the other sheep’ are impossible to tell apart. After the Assyrian exile the 10 lost tribes blended with the Gentile nations. Without a doubt, Ezekiel did assure us that the tribe of Ephraim will re-emerge, and our Lord referred to them as ‘the other flock’.

The Apostle Paul mentioned them as a people living ‘afar off’ and undeniably argued that the blessings of Ephraim or those who were ‘far away’ are now endorsed in the Church
Eph. 2:11-12 - ‘We who were once called the Gentiles in the flesh and the uncircumcised, separated from Christ and alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world, were brought close to God.’ Ephraim lived as the heathen nations and according to Hosea they were called Lo-Ruchamah meaning ‘God will not be merciful to the house of Israel’, and Lo-ammi meaning ‘they are not My people’. God will not reckon with them as part of the old covenant, but once they believe Him, He will embrace them. Living a life without Christ is having no hope. Israel was familiar with the impending new covenant and Jeremiah 31:31 quotes it. He said the days are coming when God will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.
Eph. 2:13 - ‘But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ.’
Ephraim did stroll away, and they were like the prodigal son who got lost in a far country. Eph. 2:14- Only Christ can bring them together, as He broke down the wall that partitioned them. The blessing of Ephraim is acknowledged in the Church, and they are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with God's people. The hostility is gone, and God made them one, as He healed the divide between two snapped pieces of wood belonging to Judah and the 10 lost tribes of Israel. Ezek. 37:16
The many shepherds will be dismissed and the only remaining ‘One’ Shepherd will lead them. The many bones in the valley Ezek. 37 will adhere to form a new Israel.
Eph. 2:16 - Through the cross, Christ will put to death the hostility that used to divide the 2 and the 10 tribes.
Eph. 2:17 - He came, and He preached peace to those who were afar off and to those who were near.
It's interesting because those who were ‘afar off’ are the 10 lost tribes, and those who are near are the 2 tribes, Judah. The 10 lost tribes readily accepted the message of Christ, but Judah fabricated lies to confuse the people. The message of peace is the new covenant that God promised throughout the Old Testament, and the voice is the Words of the good Shepherd. He will lead them to the greener pastures, and even if they were scattered, it will never happen again.
A certain woman washed the feet of our Lord with oil. The feet of the good Shepherd will trumpet the message of the Gospel, and the sheep will recognise His voice, as His Words are likened to the sweet smell of the oil that permeated the house. Peace is an attribute of the new covenant and Isaiah promised it.
‘Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will heal him.’ Isa. 57:19 Once more the emphasis is on those who are far away.
The heathen who accepted Christ are mostly from the 10 lost tribes of Israel, and hence the reason why the heathen are mentioned so frequently. We have no evidence of their whereabouts and it's futile to

even try to trace them.
Especially in the New Testament the sheep are frequently mentioned (over 40 times), and whenever we do read of them we need to be reminded of the passages in Ezekiel 34. The Gospel of peace was accepted by those ‘far away’ or to those who were scattered in the Assyrian exile nearly 2700 years ago. At a later time after the rapture of the Church, all the tribes of Israel, close and far, will be saved to enter the Millennium.
Peter once said the Jews need to accept Christ as the heathen did. The sequence is important as the blessings of Ephraim are replicated in the Church. They are regarded as the real firstborn as they did receive Christ before the Jews. They are the ‘other sheep’.
‘I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.’ John 10:16
That explains why our Lord often went to Samaria, as He felt more welcome there.
When the disciples preached the Gospel they were advised to primarily reach the Samaritans and then they were free to go to the utmost part of the world. Paul expressed his wishes Rom. 15:24, 28 to visit Spain, but in the Bible there is no mention of it happening. Some believe he went there, and he even ventured further to England as many from Ephraim lived there. Some presume there may be a linkage between the Apostle Paul and St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, and he was treated well by the Druids. We cannot prove any of this, but I believe he headed to the ‘other flock’ and he died no martyr's death, as masses of people accepted his message.
There is a continual rivalry between Rome and England, as to which country was the first to receive the message of Christ. Various historical documents indicate that, after Jerusalem, the first Christian Church was established in England. Its founder was Joseph of Arimathea, Mark 15:43 the uncle of Mary, the mother of our Lord. He was Jesus' great uncle. Joseph was a rich merchant having a large fleet of ships that ran the tin trade for the Roman Empire, between England and the Mediterranean waters. As Jesus' great uncle, Joseph became Jesus' guardian, his next of kin. When Mary's husband, Joseph, died early in Jesus' life, he took Jesus with him on his journeys to Glastonbury, England. The place we know as Avalon, the Avalon of King Arthur. And abroad, that was the site of the first Christian Church, which is built on a mount above the ground. It is surrounded by marshlands. It is fitting to paraphrase an old saying, ‘All Christian roads lead to England.’
Now many Christians at Glastonbury believe it’s accurate. A rivalry always existed between England and Rome and even during the time of King Henry VIII, as he severed the Pope's role in appointing the bishops.
Reflecting the history of Israel, we can conclude that Ephraim accepted the message of the cross and Paul met prominent people from England whilst he was in prison. Initially, the blessings of the new covenant had their roots in the Church or Ephraim, and certainly before Judah, who as a nation will only receive Christ during the great tribulation.
There are different ways to trace the 10 lost tribes, and one other is to ask

where the Gospel found its roots. They are the Anglo-Saxon nations or north-west Europe, and to all the other places they emigrated to e. g. New Zealand and North America. Amongst them, the Jews felt safe and many times we read of Judah finding refuge at Ephraim.
Furthermore we can trace the whereabouts of the 10 lost tribes by the placement of the monoliths or the large obelisks. That hides their locality for the past thousands of years. At Washington, we find the world's tallest solitary stone structure and also the world's tallest obelisk, standing 555 feet high. There are taller columns, but they are not solitary or true obelisks. That practice commenced when Jacob fought with an angel, resulting in him coming to faith. Since that time, he was called Israel. He erected the stone he slept on. We may endeavour to trace the whereabouts of the 10 lost tribes but remember it’s difficult as there were huge migrations in countries during the dark ages, roughly between 300 to 700 A. D.
As previously mentioned, Dan is not named in the summary of the 12 tribes in the Book of Revelation. In chapter 7, Joseph is named and not Ephraim. Manasseh, the other son of Joseph, is named, and we can conclude that Joseph represents Ephraim. Both the names of Dan and Ephraim are mystified as they personify the truths pertaining to the Church.
Revelation chapter 7 pictures a time when both Israel and Judah repent. The 70th week of Daniel did end with their repentance, but the world outside is still oblivious to the message of Christ. For the following 33 years, the 144,000 believers (or the 12,000 from each tribe of Israel) will literally evangelise the world, and that has to do with Christ’s earthly kingdom on earth. Dan and Ephraim are not mentioned here, as they epitomise the Church and their blessings in heaven. Some dare to think that Dan is not mentioned in the Book of Revelation as he is the Antichrist. Dan is a judge, and he will judge the nations. The Book of Genesis 49:16–18 has something special to say about Dan.
‘Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider shall fall backward. I wait for your salvation, O Lord.’
Dan will judge the people, and that is a hint of the Church (1 Corinthians 6:3) as the Church will judge the angels in heaven. The tribe of Dan is frequently mentioned in the latter chapters of the Book of Judges. They are the ‘viper’ that caused the rider to rear and fall backwards, and then follows a notable verse:
‘I wait for your salvation, O Lord.’
If ever since the history from Adam there is a time of waiting, it is our dispensation, and until now it has lasted almost 2000 years. We need to wait and be patient, as Peter warned us to be diligent while we await His return (2 Peter 3:14). Paul told us to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead (1 Thessalonians 1:10). We need to grasp the context of this verse to appreciate the real meaning of the serpent, the rider, and the horse.
Dan will be a serpent! When we do read of a snake in the Bible, we need to think of the snake Moses raised on a pole. At that time, whenever an

Israelite was bitten by a snake, he was doomed to die, but when he fixed his eyes on the snake on the pole, then he lived (Numbers 21:9)!‘And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up’ (John 3:14). I don’t think of the snake in the garden of Eden as he is the old serpent, but rather the Serpent that is hoisted, as He is reminiscent of the new covenant. Dan is also a judge, and if we acquaint ourselves with the true Judge, we will know it speaks of Christ.

Next, we may argue which way the horse and its rider followed. We can study John and the Book of Acts, as it says that Christ is the way. We too need to follow the way of patience. Paul said: ‘He had been taught the way of the Lord … they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately’ (Acts 18:25–26).

The way is also the long time of waiting we need to endure as His kingdom is postponed on earth. Peter once said some did leave the way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam (2 Peter 2:15). Our way leads us through death and resurrection, and we need to linger for a long period (2000 years). Indeed, the serpent is poisonous, and we are bitten. At Calvary, we lost everything and our lives when we accepted our Lord. If we look upon the risen Serpent, we will inherit eternal life. The teachings of the Bible are dangerous, causing death to the old man, but when we look to the raised Serpent, we attain new life.

Along the way, the horse was bitten in its heels. The horses convey His kingdom. The majestic horse in battle (Zechariah 10:3) portrays our Lord in splendour, and it is reminiscent of His second coming to earth. In contrast, the previous chapter speaks of our Lord’s first coming to earth when He was humbled, riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9), but with His return He will ride on a horse.

Along the way, the horse was bitten in its heel, and the rider fell backwards. That was not forewarned, and it caused a great delay.

The serpent biting the heel of the horse has to do with the death of our Lord and also the rider that fell backwards. For the time being, there is no mention of any kingdom, and it is not Satan’s doing, but it is in accordance with God’s will. We are familiar with the Lord, who in the near future will be a King riding on a horse. The delay portrays our time of waiting, as the road to His glory is postponed. It is easy to read the negative implications, but to us our time of waiting is a real blessing. We are not dependent on Satan’s plans to think that he caused that delay, but rather we are reliant on God and His plans.

We all need to wait, and there are more times in the Bible when the people had to wait for God’s deliverance, as during the time of the Judges and also the period between the Book of Malachi and our Lord’s birth at Bethlehem. They resemble our long time of waiting.

Dan portrays our time, and figuratively Christ is the serpent and ‘the way’ is the path the horse and its rider had to follow. When the rider fell backwards, it can also imply Judas who epitomises the Jews or Judah. Judas fell backwards and died a horrible death (Acts 1:18). Similarly, Israel fell backwards, and it ruined their expectations of the kingdom. As the children of Israel, we are in the desert en route from Egypt to Canaan, awaiting our final redemption.

Samaria used to be the capital of the 10 lost tribes, and in the New Testament they are often quoted. After the deportation of the 10 lost tribes into the Assyrian exile in 722 BC, a few Israelites did remain in the country, and heathen people were brought in to inhabit the land. Those who remained did intermingle with the heathen nations, and according to the Jews they were not ethnically pure. To trace the whereabouts of the 10 lost tribes is difficult, and the Bible is not engrossed with that question. However, the remaining Samaritans were snubbed by the Jews.

After the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity, the King of Persia supported them to rebuild the temple. When the Samaritans heard about this, they were eager to help the Jews, thinking they served the same God. The Jews in Jerusalem refused the Samaritans the opportunity, as they considered their God different from the God of the Samaritans, judging the Samaritans ethnically impure. Hence, it resulted in open enmity between the two. The Jews told them they had nothing in common with them. They only wanted to rebuild the temple as inspired by King Cyrus of Persia. He blessed them. The Samaritans discouraged and frightened the people of Judah to restrain their work for 20 years. They frustrated Judah and successfully prevented them from building the temple.

The timing was perfect to rebuild the temple, being in harmony with God's prophecy, and they had the authority from King Cyrus. Yet a few Samaritans prevented them. After 20 years of struggle, they again searched for all the documents to rebuild the temple, and then they built it effectively.

The 20-year delay epitomises our dispensation. Now there is no temple, and the Jews had the opportunity to receive the risen Christ, and if they had, there would have been a physical temple in Jerusalem. However, that never happened, and now they need to wait for their temple, and that will happen once they receive Christ with His return to earth. In the meantime (20 years), there is another temple or the Church, which is His body. 'Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?' (1 Corinthians 3:16). Indirectly, the Samaritans were instrumental as they symbolised the Church. While the Church (Samaritans) is on earth, no temple will be built in Jerusalem.

The history of Judah ended when the rider of the horse fell backwards. Now the Jews claim there is no temple, but we know better. After our rapture, the setting is perfect for Israel to build a temple in Jerusalem, as the firstborn right of Ephraim is procured in the Church.

It may not strike us, but our Lord is considered as the true Good Samaritan who helped the stranger who was left to die on the wayside. Both the priest and the Levite, who were responsible for the social welfare of the people, were inept to help. The Good Samaritan walked uphill from Jericho to Jerusalem, but the priest and the Levite walked down the easy road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Our thoughts need to be engrossed on the Good Samaritan and ask who He is. At that time, the Samaritans were regarded as Israel's greatest enemies, but in this parable, the Good Samaritan is the risen Christ, and not a law-abiding citizen. Our Lord associated Himself with the Samaritan or the 10 lost tribes of Israel, as they were entrusted with the firstborn rights.

Once, when our Lord wanted to go to Jerusalem, He decided to pass through Samaria and Galilee. When He entered a certain village, ten men who were lepers met Him, standing afar off. The 10 lepers are the 10 lost tribes of Israel, and they stood afar. They all shouted and said, ‘Jesus, have mercy on us!’ The Lord replied that they had to go to the priest to present themselves as detailed by the laws of Moses. Miraculously, they were cleansed of their leprosy. Only one of them, who noticed that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice he glorified God. He fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks (Luke 17:11–19). The lepers stood ‘afar off’, and the ten who were cleansed were not His people, but they were blessed and called God’s people. Figuratively, the Samaritans portray what will happen to each believer in Christ. They who stood afar off were regarded as sinners and the leprous, characterising the decaying nature of sin. When we receive Christ and hail Him as our Priest, then we will notice we are cleansed from every known sin or leprosy.

The Hebrew Bible portrays our Lord as our High Priest. The one who returned to the Lord is the Church, as he praised our Lord, and we too are called to praise His Name. The other nine did not bother to thank Him, and they will never enter the promised rest. Not everyone from the 10 lost tribes will be saved.

The bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans continued during the time of our Lord; the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (John 4:9). Our Lord was in contempt and was called ‘a Samaritan’ (John 8:48). Many people from Samaria did embrace the Gospel (John 4:5–42; Acts 8:25; 9:31; 15:3). From those Samaritans, there still remains a small enclave of people who continue to reside in Shechem, where they carefully observe the religious customs of their fathers. They are the ‘smallest and oldest sect in the world’.

We will discover that the Samaritans epitomise the Church, and whatever is said of Samaria validates the Church and also the 10 lost tribes. They will always remain a mystery to the world. Similarly, the world is oblivious to the Church or the whereabouts of the 10 lost tribes. Once the world accepts Christ, they will also learn the truths regarding the 10 tribes. Whoever believes in Him has the power to become the children of God (John 1:12), but later, after Christ’s resurrection from the dead, John said that we are the sons of God (1 John 3:2). We cannot imagine what we will be like when Christ returns, but we do know when He does appear, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is. Then the veil will be lifted for the world, and all the truths concerning us will be revealed. We know what is beneath the cover, but it will be exposed. The secrecy regarding the firstborn and the Church will be recognised by the world.

John 4 is a memorable chapter when our Lord confronted the Samaritan woman at the well. Our Lord went to Galilee, and at that place the Jews had a major centre of Jewish learning, and most of the rabbinic literature was composed there, except for the Talmud. Amongst the population, there were many Gentile nations, who mostly lived at Nazareth. Joseph and Mary resettled in Nazareth after fleeing to Egypt from His birthplace at Bethlehem. The Jews did question if any good can come from Nazareth (John 1:46). In the Book of Isaiah, we read of Galilee:

‘Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past He humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future He will honour Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan’ (Isaiah 9:1).
That verse is quoted in the New Testament (Matthew 4:15). With our Lord’s first coming to earth, He frequently left Judea to visit Galilee. Many times He deserted the 2 tribes of Israel to relate Himself with the 10 lost tribes of Israel, or the scattered Jews amongst the Gentiles. Before reaching the district of Galilee (Gentile nations), He detoured to Samaria (10 lost tribes).
Paul once said that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it (Acts 28:28). Earlier in the Book of Acts, the disciples had to be His witnesses firstly in Jerusalem and Judea, then Samaria, followed by to the ends of the earth. We may question whether the Samaritans were Gentiles, but the Romans regarded them as a Jewish sect. Before the Lord went to Galilee, He decided to go through Samaria, and He went to Sychar, a city in Samaria. Sychar is only mentioned once, when our Lord Jesus visited Jacob’s Well (John 4:5).
‘So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: and Jacob’s well was there.’
The evidence today is that Sychar is situated east of Shechem. It is only mentioned because of its nearness to the well, and its closeness to the land that was once given to Joseph. His bones were finally buried in the city of Shechem (Joshua 24:32). It was the sixth hour. The letter 6 is likened to a hook that ties the letter 5 with the letter 7. The letter 5 conveys the five Books of Moses, and the 7 is the revealed Kingdom belonging to Christ. The Samaritans will bond the tribe of Judah with the Gentile nations, or unify the 2 and the 10 lost tribes of Israel in Christ.
We may question which woman will approach our Lord from the 10 lost tribes or Israel. The woman portrays the Church, and if the Church worships Christ, then they are considered as feminine, securing a bond with Him.
The Lord asked the Samaritan woman to give Him some water to drink, or Judah asks Joseph to give Him something to drink.
The next question the woman asked is where the Kingdom is; and where do they need to worship Him? In Jerusalem or at Gerizim, the mountain the woman referred to (John 4:20). The Lord said it is not a matter of place, as the time is coming when it will not matter whether you worship the Father here or in Jerusalem. The redemption is from outside, but it comes through the Jews (4:22). It is not confined to the Jews, as the footing of the Gospel is procured in them, but it will permeate to the Samaritans and to the outside world.
The Samaritan woman believed every word the Lord told her, and besides she was familiar with the five Books of Moses. She said: ‘I know the Messiah will come, who is called the Christ. When He comes, He will explain everything to us.’ A Prophet as Moses will reveal everything, and He will redeem the world at a more grandiose scale. The things that used to be a mystery for Moses, or the hidden things he mentioned as belonging to the Lord our God (Deuteronomy 29:29), will be revealed to

us. Everything that used to be hidden will come to light via the new covenant, and there will be no hidden lurking shadows. To us, the secret things are known, and Christ will lead us into those truths.
The truth will set us free (John 8:32). The woman was assured that He was the Messiah, once the Lord told her: ‘I am He’ who speaks to you (4:25–26). Through His Spirit, everything will be made known to us. The woman ran to the town and told them she had found the promised Messiah. The other Samaritans ran to Him, leaving everything. We too need to free ourselves from everything we possess, and if we esteem ourselves, believing we are from the tribe of Ephraim or Judah, it will not be of any advantage to us. We need to relinquish everything if we decide for the better. Then we will gain a double portion, and we can approach Him as the other people from Samaria.
The Samaritan people begged Him to remain there for another two days, and during that time the temple of God was in their midst. The magic that did not happen during the time of Ezra is happening now, as the tabernacle of God is hidden inside the believing Samaritan.
The two days relay our dispensation of waiting. We need to wait for the third day! Many times we do read of the ‘two’ as the two years Paul spent in prison, being locked away from the outside world; the two days of Hosea 6:2; and the 2000-cubit distance between the ark and the nation of Israel (Joshua 3:2) that portrays our time of waiting. During our 2000 years of waiting, the Church is called.
Once the Church is completed, He will leave the Samaritans to go to Galilee, to approach the Jews and the Gentile nations living there. It says many Samaritans did believe in Him, as the one leper who was a Samaritan. Only the ‘one’ who returned to thank the Lord will enter His kingdom. When the Samaritans were taken captive, they already had the five Books of Moses in 722 BC. Some argue that during the Babylonian exile, Ezra did write and compile the five Books of Moses, but that is wrong. If that is true, how did the Samaritans take the five Books of Moses with them into the captivity?
They did not have the whole Old Testament, but the Samaritan woman did question our Lord with regards to the five Books of Moses, and besides she expected the Messiah.
During the Babylonian captivity, the Jews did write the Talmud, and it still exists today. At that time, Ezra meticulously compiled some of the Old Testament books as he was inspired by God, but he never wrote the five Books of Moses. Since that time, the Jews did gather in the synagogues, and in Greek the word ‘synagogue’ means an assembly.
The Jews did accuse the Lord Jesus of being a Samaritan or parting with the 10 lost tribes. They said:
‘Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?
’Jesus answered, ‘I do not have a demon; but I honour My Father, and you dishonour Me’ (John 8:48–49). The Jews used to believe that the Samaritans were possessed by demons, thinking they feigned the Scriptures. Our Lord told them He had no demon, but He never attempted to say He was not a Samaritan. The question begs an answer.

The disciples were told to primarily preach the Gospel to the Jews at Judah, and then they could go to the Samaritans, to be followed by the Gentiles. Before the message was preached to the Gentiles, they had to reach the 10 lost tribes or the Samaritans (Acts 1:8). In Acts 8, it says the message went throughout Samaria, and there was also the mishap with Simon. When the Apostles Peter and John laid their hands on the believers, they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given when the apostles were laying their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. Peter replied, ‘May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!’ There will always be a question mark whether he really belonged to Christ, as his prime motive was money. The same with Christendom today, as there are many questions regarding their motives.
In this chapter, the Apostles Peter and John came down from Jerusalem and they blessed the Samaritans, and they received the Spirit of Christ. The rift that used to divide the 2 and the 10 tribes will unite in the Church, and our Shepherd will lead them as one flock. Whenever we study Ephraim or Dan, we somehow need to relate their history to the Church. Remember, Samson was also from the tribe of Dan.

Micah

- priest, not earthly ruler yet).

The remaining chapter hinges on the importance of a particular man called Micah or Micaiah; as in the Hebrew language, his name suggests ‘Who is like God?’ To understand this chapter, we need to discern who he is, and again we will find that he portrays Christ and no one else. The word can be broken into two words, namely ‘Who is like Yahweh?’ That is commonly accepted by most Bible commentators.
There was a man from the mountains of Ephraim, and the question remains who is that man, and who will resemble Jehovah? We will discover that symbolically he portrays the Messiah. Jehovah is the unseen, but whenever He is visible or we do see His countenance or even His back (Exodus 33:23), then it will be none other than our Lord or the Messiah. It says that when Abraham saw the Angel or the messenger of the Lord, it was indeed Jehovah Himself, and even the prophet Isaiah saw Him (John 12:41). If any person today wants to gain a clear picture of Jehovah, they only need to gain insight into our Lord’s walk on earth, and it is vital for them to know Him as the resurrected.

In the provided text, both Micah and Michael serve as profound typological representations of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Their connection begins with their names: in Hebrew, both Micah (or Micaiah) and Michael translate to **"Who is like God?"** or "Who is like Yahweh?". Whenever this question is posed in the Scriptures, the answer invariably points to the risen Christ, who is the visible image of the invisible God.

Here is a deeper look at how each figure symbolically portrays the Lord:

Micah: The Risen Christ and the New Covenant Micah, described as a man from the mountains of Ephraim, embodies the risen Christ establishing the new covenant. His story revolves around several key symbolic elements:

- The 1,100 Pieces of Silver: Micah takes 1,100 pieces of silver from his mother, who prophetically represents the nation of Israel. The silver symbolizes the keys to the Scriptures and the promises of the new covenant, which Israel and orthodox Judaism had been entrusted with but ultimately lost. Micah possessing the silver signifies that Christ holds the keys of knowledge and redemption.
- The Image, Ephod, and Teraphim: Micah's mother dedicates the silver to make a carved and molded image, which typifies Christ as the perfect, visible image of God. Furthermore, Micah creates an ephod and teraphim, bypassing the old covenant laws of Moses to initiate a new service to the Lord. The ephod represents Christ's eternal role as our High Priest, while the teraphim represents the "hidden Christ" found throughout the Old Testament.
- The Hidden Lord: Later in the narrative, warriors from the tribe of Dan take Micah's priest and sacred items. When Micah chases after them complaining that he has nothing left, the Danites warn him to keep quiet, and Micah retreats to hide himself. This serves as a powerful picture of our current dispensation: Christ is currently hidden in heaven, and God does not speak aloud, as His revelation is already complete in His written Word.

Michael: The Archangel and Protector While Micah portrays the Lord's current hidden priesthood and His establishment of grace, Michael represents Christ's active, intervening power.

- The Crown Prince: Mentioned in Daniel 12:1, Michael is described as the Archangel who stands guard over the nation of Israel. The sources explicitly identify Michael not just as an ordinary angel, but as Christ appearing in an angelic role. As the author of Hebrews notes, Christ is higher than any angel, making Him the principal angel or Archangel.
- The Guardian of Israel: Michael represents the "crown Prince" who will one day vacate His heavenly throne to tend to His scattered sheep. He is the great Prince who will directly intervene to defend the Jewish people during their future times of great tribulation.

Ultimately, both Micah and Michael illustrate different facets of the same divine truth. The hidden truths of Micah’s actions reveal Christ's role as the High Priest of the new covenant who holds the keys to salvation, while Michael reveals His role as the sovereign Prince who will visibly return to rescue Israel

In future, Jehovah will be noticeable, and then the world will acquaint themselves with His scars He endured. Israel will experience the great tribulations, and in the end, when they do call on His Name, they will be bewildered, asking, ‘What are these wounds on your hands?’ (Zechariah 13:6).

Whenever we think of God, we need to get a clear picture of Christ, as He pictures God. In the future, when we do see Him, we will recognise the scars, but when Abraham saw our Lord, He had no scars. Even if our Lord is not identical to Jehovah, they are One, and whatever happens to the One is relayed to the other. When our Lord was crucified, then Jehovah or God acquired the scars. When Jehovah appears, He will be recognised via the scars as the Lord Jesus.
The subject of this chapter is who is like Jehovah? It is our risen Lord or Christ, and He will redeem Israel.
Later in the Book of Daniel, a similar question is asked regarding the name of the Angel. In the Book of Daniel 12:1, there was an Angel named Michael—meaning ‘Who is like God?’ It is Christ, as He will be the Archangel to guard the nation of Israel. Then He will stand, as previously He was seated at the right hand of God, interceding for us. That implies that He is the first or the principal Angel, and He will intervene for Israel. The verse clearly says He is the Angel ‘your prince’. When Christ appears as an Angel, He will be known as Michael, the principal Angel and the firstborn among them. He will be the great Prince who will guard the people. He is the crown Prince, as the lineage of all the princes and kings in the Old Testament leads us to Christ. It is clearly summarised in the Book of Matthew, chapter 1. Christ will vacate His throne to tend to His scattered sheep.
The whole first chapter of the Book of Hebrews says that Christ is higher than any angel, and among them He is the principal angel or the Archangel.
Together, the words man, mountain, Ephraim, and Micah denote the risen Christ, and they do have a resemblance. Remember, Micah did live on earth, and his life was factual.
Micah told his mother that he had the 1100 pieces of silver. We may ask who is the mother of Micah or our Lord? The answer is found in the Book of Revelation, chapter 12, as in this vision the mother of the child is Israel. Some may argue that the mother is Mary, but remember Mary portrays the believing remnant of Israel. Earlier in the Book of Judges, we spoke of Miriam the prophetess, and her name is also Mary, and she portrays Israel. Miriam made many prophetic utterances regarding Israel, and she is reckoned as a judge (Judges 5).
To simplify things: Christ did say to the believing remnant of Israel that He had the 1100 silver pieces. ‘The 1100 pieces of silver that were taken from you and about which I heard you utter a curse—I have that silver with me; I took it.
Then his mother said, “The Lord bless you, my son!”’ (Judges 17:2).
Israel was distraught about the 1100 pieces of silver, and she knew they were entrusted to her, but somehow she lost them. She did curse herself

and the silver pieces that were given to Delilah are lost. Figuratively speaking, Delilah the Philistine did symbolise Israel, and the 1100 pieces were entrusted to her.
The number 1100 is only found in the latter chapters of the Book of Judges, and it signifies the new covenant and especially with respect to the Church, but nonetheless she lost it. That is the true picture of orthodox Christendom today or Judaism during the time of our Lord. They were entrusted with the Scriptures but sadly they lost the crucial key or Christ. When we do picture Judaism, it is usually a rabbi who studies the Old Testament or the Talmud. They eagerly search the Scriptures but somehow they don't seem to find what they are looking for. Judaism or mainstream Christianity did lose something, and they continually search and argue their cause. They lost it, and they are frustrated. They do talk about the 'truth' but fail to respect the Resurrected.
We all experience great despair when we lose our keys, and once we find them we are so pleased. Similarly, we need to be excited as we do have the keys to unlock the truths in the Scriptures. Christ told Israel that He has the keys!
Christ is the One who carries the key of David. He opens the doors, and no one can shut them; He shuts the doors, and no one can open them (Revelation 3:7).
The Lord accused the religious leaders of hiding the keys. 'Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge' (Luke 11:52). If we don't have the key, we are 'locked away' far from all the promises God made. The religious leaders who study the law will never understand it or grasp the real truth. It says: 'And the word of the Lord will be to them precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little, that they may go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken' (Isaiah 28:13). Isaiah wrote this long before the Talmud was written, or before Judah was sent into the Babylonian captivity. It sketches a true picture of Judaism, also counting mainstream Christendom, as they fail to discover Christ in them. On the outside, they look reputable, but they are filled to the brim with their many laws. The trouble is we base our decisions to appease our visible appearance (2 Corinthians 10:7).
The Samaritan woman had five men, and she was familiar with the five books of Moses. Some may question why the five Books, thinking that the number 5 portrays the time of our grace or our time of waiting. They are wrong, as the five Books of Moses have copious illustrations of God's grace. In the law, God's grace is clearly pictured, and the law does teach us how God deals with sin. More than merely telling us what to do, it also elaborates on the 'way out' if we do transgress—and don't we all?
If we regard the law in that perspective, we will quickly acquaint ourselves with the true High Priest, who will forgive all our trespasses. The law acquaints us with the one true offer that will redeem our world. The more we study the law, the more we will realise that the laws are unpractical. We can inflict the people with the many laws, and in no way will the many laws change their heart or their genetics for the better. We are all guilty, and the law tells us what to do about it. If we strive to fulfil the laws, we

will be caught in a knot, and there is no respite. The old covenant will tie us down, but not the new covenant. The many knots or ropes that used to ensnare Samson simply vanished.
The law illustrates how grace will abound, and therefore the five Books of Moses and the five porches of Bethesda.
We ought to recognise that the Gospel of John is not a synoptic Gospel, as it only focuses on 22 days of our Lord's life. It addresses the leading issues why Judaism rejected the Lord as their Messiah, and it exposes the real spiritual condition of the Jews. John chapter 5 commences with one of the Jews' feasts, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, there was a gate into the city called the Sheep Gate—the gate the sheep used to enter, to be sacrificed in the temple. The building of that gate is mentioned previously in Neh. 3:1, 32; 12:39, and John says that by the Sheep Gate there was a pool of water called in Hebrew "Bethesda". "Bethesda" means a house of kindness, grace or mercy. Now, by the Sheep Gate there was a pool, which is called Bethesda, having five porches. Close to the pool was a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, waiting for the moving of the waters; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water. Whoever happened to be first at the water after the stirring, was cured of whatever disease they had (John 5:2–4). This source of the water in the pool was from an underground spring. One of the men lying there had been sick for 38 years. When Jesus saw him, He knew he had been ill for a long time, and He asked him, "Would you like to be healed?" "I can't," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me. " Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" (John 5:5–7). Immediately the man walked, but the drawback was that it happened on the Sabbath.
This incident gives us some insight into the wicked hearts of the religious Jews. They witnessed the healing of the lame man, but sadly they bemoaned him; they rebuked him for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. Clearly, this healing was primarily made to target the Jews. Our Lord had to prove the callousness of the religious Jews. If a true believer saw a great miracle of God, certainly they would be rejoicing with the man, to praise God for the healing. Yet, their first obsession—the blind Jews'—was centred on the laws of Moses and not the free flow of God’s grace. By healing on the Sabbath, our Lord had broken one of their "sacred" laws. By denouncing the miracle as coming from Satan because it was done on the Sabbath, they revealed the Jews' real spiritual colour. They held to the letter of the law, but not the spirit of the law, as Paul says in 2 Cor. 3:6. The lame man did not fall into the water, but the living water is Christ Himself. It pictures the Church, as they are the first to enter the promises of the new covenant. The previously impotent and lame man became alive.
The Jewish nation lost something, and they are left despondent, not finding the treasure. Having lost the treasure is the sole reason why they are so restless on earth. It says of Cain that he will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and he portrays Israel (Gen. 4:14). The motto of today is to continually search for what our heart desires, but it is senseless if we can

never find it. Our reward is locked away with Christ, and beside Him there is no one who will ever quench our thirst. Proverbs 8:17 says that those who seek Him early shall find Him, and their remaining years will be filled with joy. The Book of 1 Corinthians 1:24 says that the real truth is locked away in Christ, and He is the wisdom of God. He is the core of all our searching.

The money—or the silver—was with Micah. He did not steal it, and it is senseless to delve into all the moral issues. Almost every commentator condemns Micah, saying: "He is a thieving son from a cursing mother. He restored the money, and the poor heathen woman can merely say, ‘Blessed be thou of the Lord, my son.’

"The woman claimed 200 shekels of silver, and she made two images to end their life in idolatry. There is no need for any comment!

The truth is easy to grasp. Here is a man-made god, man-made worship, and a man-made priest! Sadly, it pictures their insight if they study everything within the scope of the law. It will blind their eyes, and everything will be "precept upon precept", as Isaiah once said. We need to glance at it from a different perspective.

Micah took the silver as he knew his mother’s money was secured by him. I am pleased that our redemption is not dependent on us or Israel, or any other person, except God. The Jewish nation believes that the Old Testament is only meant for the Jewish nation, and today many Christians believe that the message of the Bible is merely to advance ourselves. In contrast, I believe that every page of the Bible speaks of Christ and His work for us. Micah said the silver was with him, and he would guard it. The woman was excited when she blessed him. She was not offended, as she was pleased and confident it would secure her future. Now, many believe that the Scripture holds no promises, as they are filled with ideas that will never develop.

Throughout history, a number of famous Jewish people did discard their belief in God. There are the renowned philosophers such as Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein, who rejected the notion of a personal God. Karl Marx, the communist leader, was also a Jew. Now there is a general despair amongst many Christians, thinking the world will continue endlessly, and they don’t anticipate His return. Pinning our hope on any other person is futile. Once the Jews expected Theodor Herzl to be their Messiah, who was the founder of the Zionist movement. Many believed him to be a saviour, promising them a lasting future. Our promises are locked away by the One who is called Jehovah—or Micah ("who is like Him?"). It is difficult to decide if the mother or Micah was blessed by the 1,100 pieces, but that is insignificant.

The woman said the 1,100 pieces of silver were entrusted to the Lord, and she solemnly wanted to dedicate them to the Lord or for her son, to make a carved image and a moulded image. She entrusted the money to Micah. The image will be to the glory of the Father, as He is named.

It was consecrated to the Lord, and if we allow moral questions to dominate our thinking, it will be time-wasting. They usually question the moulded image, as the Law forbids us to make any sort of idol (Ex. 20:4).

Many people think Micah was oblivious to the laws of Moses when he endeavoured to make a moulded image. They believe the money was stolen and then returned to its owner to make a moulded image. Whenever we study the Scripture, we constantly need to ask ourselves: "Are there any promises concerning our new life in Christ?" It is outrightly wrong to condemn Micah's motive. We need to probe for the hidden meaning.

The image she agreed to make will be plausible, as it is the "One who moulds it" who is made in the very image of God. The question "Who is made like God?"—yes, it is Christ. That is why it is entrusted to Micah, and the image will reflect the Lord who is the very image of the invisible God. It says that Christ is the visible image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). When we study the laws of Moses telling us not to make a graven image, it implies that if we do endeavour to make one, it will never be a true image of God. God will create one, and we have it. Christ is the image of God and the pinnacle of God’s plan.

Many times we try to picture God in our minds, and believe me, trying that is futile if we don’t picture our Lord’s life on earth and the real meaning of His resurrection. Paul says: "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

That is outlined to us with the image Micah made, as he tried to picture the risen Christ. Everywhere on earth, people expect a "messiah with their ideology", thinking he will comply with their many demands. Hollywood tries to satisfy our hunger with their heroes who are out for revenge, or the often-cited "sweet revenge" to end the story on a high note.

Many may think the "carved and the moulded image" are two, but they are one. To make an image, we need to carve the mould and then pour the metal inside the carving to make a moulded image. His mother took 200 silver coins to the founder, who made them into a moulded image, and the image was placed in Micah's house. Whatever happened to the other 900 silver coins, we do not know.

We already mentioned the 11. The number 10 represents the promises in the written Word of God. The 11 is the hidden kingdom, and 12 the revealed kingdom. We are familiar with the number 110, as it pictures the age both Joshua and Caleb used to live to. That is mentioned in the Book of Judges.

I wish to mention a few more examples where we find the number 11 or the 200 (2) and the 900 silver pieces. There were 1,100 pieces of silver, and only 200 of them were used for the moulded image. The question is not what happened with the remaining 900 pieces of silver, but rather the importance of the configuration of the numbers.

- Genesis 32:22: In this chapter, Jacob had 11 sons, and he also wrestled with an angel. Early that night, Jacob’s family crossed the brook Jabbok, but he remained on the other side of the brook. That night he wrestled with an angel, but it ended when he succumbed to the angel or God. Then his name was changed from Jacob to Israel. That pictures the rebirth of Jacob, as he accepted so many truths that made him see things from a different perspective. I am certain

he must have had some insights regarding the truths of our time. Then Jacob had 11 sons and 2 wives, and that grouping of numbers is more frequently mentioned, as the 11 can also be a 2 (1+1). Both the number 2 and the 11 picture the Church. Christ will make the 2 into one, and any divide will be broken down. Paul said: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The number 2 reflects the 2,000 years of God's mystery. Moreover, we are familiar with the 2 as the 2 days our Lord spent at Sychar after meeting the woman at the well. Besides, there were two men at our Lord's grave on the morning when He rose from the dead. When our Lord ascended to heaven on the Mount of Olives, He left behind 2 men who were clothed in white linen. He left behind 11 disciples. The Mount of Olives is mentioned for the first time when Ezekiel saw the glory of God ascending from Jerusalem to settle on the Mount of Olives. The glory of God then departed on high (heaven), picturing our Lord's ascension to heaven (Ezek. 11:23).

Paul travelled the sea on a ship whose sign was Castor and Pollux. The stars of Gemini include two of the most recognisable stars in the heavens: the twins Castor and Pollux. The twins or the two portray the Church. The Apostle Paul encouraged us to leave Jerusalem—or the religious enclave—and meet our Lord outside on the Mount of Olives.

Similarly, on the day of our Lord's resurrection, two people met Him outside Jerusalem—on the way to Emmaus. What matters is what happened to them when they left Jerusalem to go home, for then their eyes were opened to understand the Old Testament. They recognised Christ when He broke the bread. He must have told them many truths regarding the third day and the import of the bread.

- Joseph had a dream, and he dreamt about the sun and the moon that reflects its light, and the 11 stars that bowed down before him (Gen. 37:9). Christ is the real Joseph, and the 11 (stars) and the 2 (sun and moon) will worship Him.
- It was an eleven days' journey from Horeb, by the way of Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea (Deut. 1:2). At Mount Sinai, the people of Israel commenced with the dispensation of the law, and from that place to Kadesh-Barnea was an 11-day journey. From Kadesh-Barnea, Israel could have entered the Promised Land, and they could have entered the kingdom or the 12. Their stubbornness prevented them, as 10 of the 12 spies thought God was powerless to secure them a victory or to deliver the inhabitants of the land into their hand. The 10 is the spoken Word of God at Sinai, and the number 12 is entering His kingdom; our dispensation of grace or the 11 is sandwiched between Kadesh-Barnea and the Promised Land. The subsequent time they spent in the desert depicts our time.
- The temple was completed in the 11th year of King Solomon's reign (1 Kings 6:38). The 11th year testifies of the Church, as we are the real temple of God (1 Pet. 2:5).

- Jehoiakim reigned for 11 years before Jerusalem was captured in 606 BC. Shortly afterwards, Zedekiah reigned for 11 years, and it ended with the devastation of Jerusalem when the temple was burned down. Both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah were the last kings of Judah (2 Kings 23:36; 24:18). Our present dispensation is branded by the 11, and our dispensation will end with the fall or devastation of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and even at the end of Daniel's 70th week. The 2,000 years will lead to the destruction of Jerusalem, and then the kingdom of Christ will be made manifest.
  Interestingly, four times in Scripture we read of the 11 years of Zedekiah. The reason for it to be quoted so frequently is to alert us that there is a sure prophetic hint. He was the last king of Judah, and since then there was no other king to rule Israel. Since then, there have been many crown princes who had the opportunity to ascend the throne, but that proved impossible. The final Crown Prince is our Lord, and He lives as our King (Matt. 1).
- Ezekiel prophesied the fall of Tyre in his 11th year (Ezek. 26:1), and in the eleventh year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, God prophesied that Egypt would be devastated (Ezek. 30:20). The 11 portrays their defeat, as it will happen on the "day of the Lord" when Russia, or Gog and Magog, will bulldoze down Israel, and the fringes of that mighty army will invade both Tyre (in the north) and Egypt (in the south).
- During the Millennium, a temple will be built, and it will have a porch or a vestibule, the length of the vestibule being 20 cubits and the width 11 cubits (Ezek. 40:49). We again have the numbers 2 and 11, as the porch is at the entrance of the temple. The Church is the first to share His kingdom, and we are seated at the vestibule.
- In the 11th month, Zechariah had a vision of the day when Jerusalem is ruined, but then God will bless His remnant (Zech. 1:7).
- There was great discord amongst the labourers when they found that the people who started working in the 11th hour or at 5 o'clock in the afternoon were paid equally to those who worked all day long. They were annoyed, thinking they would be paid more (Matt. 20:9). That caused great jealousy, and I feel that we, as the firstborn or the Church, are those who commenced work in the 11th hour, and we are blessed more plenteously than any other. As a rule, the firstborn always causes great disputes.
- After Christ's resurrection, the eleven disciples were told to leave Jerusalem, and they had to go to the mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16). Galilee was an enclave for the heathen, and He left the Jews to be on the mountain (heaven). He told the disciples that once outside Jerusalem they would find Him, and similarly to us today (Heb. 13:13). The 2 men who left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus found the Lord while going home. They did return to Jerusalem to share their experience with the 11 disciples. They again met the Lord in Jerusalem (Luke 24:33). Once more, we have the 2 and the 11.
- Early in the history of the Church, Peter had to choose another disciple as Judas died. So they nominated two men: Joseph called

Barsabbas and Matthias (Acts 1:21). There were 11 disciples, and there needed to be 12, and strangely 2 were chosen to replace Judas. The other disciple needed to be acquainted with the teaching of our Lord, and he would replace Judas or Judah. Judah or the Jews fell to the side, and they were replaced by the Church or the Gentiles. Presently, the Church is blessed, and Judah is set aside. Now Matthias portrays the Church, and Judas, who died, portrays Judah. The previous verse, Acts 1:20, quotes the Psalms, saying: "Let his dwelling place be desolate, and let no one live in it, and let another take his office" (Ps. 69:25). It clearly addresses the Jews who will be set aside. Psalm 109:8 also mentions the vacant office that will be absorbed by the Church. The following verse, v. 9, condemns Judah. The first contender for the post is Joseph (or Ephraim, as the firstborn), and his other name was Barsabbas, meaning the son of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is the 7th day of the week, and the "son of the Sabbath" is the first day of the week or Sunday. Judas, who betrayed the Lord, pictures the Sabbath day in contrast to the "son of the Sabbath" who depicts Christ on the first day of the week. In the Old Testament, the sheaf of the first fruits (Lev. 23:10–14) is mentioned, and that offering was dedicated to God on the first day of the week; it clearly depicts the resurrected Christ. The waving of the first fruits or the new grains suggests that the grains came to life with His resurrection, even though we, as the Church, are encumbered with the old.

The 11 and the 2 have to do with the calling of the Church, and that is the reason why Micah’s mother searched continually for them. The secrets are locked away in our time of God’s mystery, and even Moses spoke of that (Deut. 28:28).

Via the son, the 1,100 silver coins were used to make a statue. Micah ended the unease and the vagueness regarding the 1,100 silver pieces. We merely read of the 200 pieces and nothing regarding the 900 pieces. That is not important, as the meaning of the 1,100 pieces is explained by the 200 pieces.

If we search for the significance of the number 2 or 11, we will end with our present 5th dispensation. The image was in the house of Micah, and his mother planned it that way. Micah had a house of gods, and we may query the importance. Paul says that we are the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19). Micah placed the image in the house of God, as Jacob erected the stone at Bethel. In Hebrew, the word Bethel means "the house of God". He made an ephod and a teraphim to worship God, and we may reason his motives, as it is so much out of tune with all the laws of Moses.

We need to sense that via all the phrases like the mountain, Ephraim, and image, we are dealing with a different concept, as they portray Christ and not the laws of Moses. We need to appreciate the differences.

Via the symbolism, Micah initiated a service to the Lord, and that is the essence of this chapter. Simply said, the four denotes the laws of Moses, as it is the core of the fourth dispensation. We, as part of Christ, need to look beyond the four or the laws of Moses, to the five that is part of the Church. The Book of Judges gives us a hint of the number 5, and it

exceeds the four or the laws of Moses. It is wrong to continually judge the Book in the light of the law. Micah and his doings portray the extra dimension.

He made an ephod and a teraphim, and he ordained one of his sons as priest.

An ephod is no English word, as it is a Hebrew word. The translators of the Bible did not grasp the meaning of the word, and therefore they agreed to replace the Hebrew words with English letters. It is similar with the seraph in the desert or the elevated serpent. We can grasp the real meaning of the word, as they all speak of the risen Christ, and since the world does not know Him, they will never understand the real meaning of the words such as ephod, teraphim, seraphs, or even angels. Cherub in the Bible is similar, leaving the word unchanged; it portrays Christ as seated on the right hand of God. The seraph is the elevated snake, and the cherub the risen Christ as the firstborn of the new covenant.

Cherub is an anagram, meaning that in Hebrew the letters can be rearranged into a different grouping to enhance its meaning. An anagram is a type of word play, and by rearranging the letters of a word or phrase, using all the original letters, it creates new words or phrases. The Hebrew letters for the word "cherub" (Strong’s no. 3742) are branded by the numbers 2-200-20. An anagram of the word cherub is: Baruch (20-200-2) or "to bless"; Bechor (200-20-2) meaning "firstborn"; Chabar (200-2-20), meaning "to put things together"; Rachav (2-20-200), or "a horseman riding"; and Chavar (200-2-20), "to live abundantly". There are more, but each of them gives us a clear picture of Christ, and moreover the letter 2 validates our dispensation. The Cherub is the Firstborn who was riding on his horse, and its rider fell backwards (Gen. 49).

We are familiar with many Hebrew words that are transliterated directly into the English language. The word "angel" is one of them, as we do not understand the word and no attempt is ever made to translate it. It is only transliterated, meaning the Hebrew letters are changed into English letters. Wherever we find the words, we only need to complete the puzzle and translate them as being the hidden Christ, whether it is the ephod, teraphim, cherub, seraph, or the angel.

The remaining question is: what is the meaning of the word ephod? It is first mentioned by Moses, as it was a tight-fitting attire to cover all the other clothes the high priest used to wear. First, the high priest had a coat of fine linen and then the robe, and both of them fitted loosely. Attached to the lower hem of the robe were golden bells and pomegranates. The ephod fitted securely over the robe. As part of the ephod, the fourth clothing was a breastplate with a double-folded material to hide the Urim and the Thummim. The Urim and Thummim are also transliterated from the Hebrew language, and we will discover that the 3 (ephod) and the 4 (Urim and the Thummim) are always tied together.

The ephod is not always translated as such, but in the Book of Isaiah it is translated as a plating or covering: "And ye shall defile the overlaying of thy graven images of silver, and the plating of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as an unclean thing; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence" (Isa. 30:22).

The word ephod is translated as "plating". It is the plating of a graven image to improve its appearance. The plating could be either gold or silver. The first time the ephod is mentioned is in Exodus 25, when the linen fibres were finely plated or embellished with gold, portraying eternity, and the linen Christ's resurrection. The wool is coupled with the old man or the old creation that will vanish, as the hair on Samson’s head. The high priests were not allowed to wear any woollen clothing.
Linen epitomises Christ's resurrection, and when our Lord wanted to demonstrate His future priestly work, He rose from a meal and removed His coat, picturing His death. He then clothed Himself with a linen towel and poured water into a basin. Then He began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the linen towel He had around His waist.
The ephod was made chiefly from gold and not the linen. It clearly pictures Christ as our eternal High Priest, who continually intercedes for us.
"They shall also make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a skilful workman" (Ex. 28:6). The gold was the remarkable feature, and it also had the 4 colours of the tabernacle. The two pieces of the ephod were joined together at the shoulders, and it was strapped around the waist with a belt having the same design. It was fastened at the shoulders by two clips, having an onyx stone, and it was engraved with the 12 tribal names, six on each side. The vest was tied at the waist by a twined linen strand of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet.
The word Ephod (Strong’s no. 645) is related to the word "aph" (Strong’s no. 637), meaning "to beautify", as to do via the moulding of an image with gold. It is also coupled with the word "nose". Our nose is a prominence of our face or "something extra"—some people have more prominent noses than others! The nose has a greater spiritual connotation than the mouth, as the nose is higher and more prominent than the mouth. Therefore, it is tied to the word ephod, as it conveys the power of the unseen spiritual world. The nose is the most recognised feature of our faces, and therefore the word "nose" or "aph" is also translated as "countenance". The question is: do we have eternal life, or do we have such a nose?
The same nostrils are also translated as anger, power, or wrath—as the snorting of a large bull.
Any priest was taken from the people, and they interceded for the people or nation at large.
The two sections of the ephod were joined together at the shoulders and bound at the waist with a belt of the same design. The ephod was the central part of the priest's official garments.
In the Bible, a few people wore an ephod, and each of them pictures how they became priests.
∗ Gideon. We are familiar with Aaron wearing the ephod, but the ephod is mentioned in Judges 8. Here also it denotes the glory of the resurrected Christ and his glorification. Until the time of Gideon or Judges 8, the ephod is only mentioned with regard to its materials used, but nothing is mentioned as to why it was worn. In Judges 8, we get an idea of the

ephod. In this chapter, the people of Israel were keen to declare Gideon as their king, but he refused, saying the Lord will rule over them, and He is in heaven. They urged him, but he refused the opportunity. However, he had one request for the people. He asked each of them to give the earrings they looted from the slain Ishmaelites. They did it gladly, and the weight of the gold earrings was 1,700 shekels of gold. Gideon made a sacred ephod from the gold and put it in Ophrah, his hometown. He told them he is no priest or king, but he can give them an idea about the qualities of their High Priest in heaven. Now we live in a comparable time to the Judges, and we too can fix our eyes on the ephod, as it’s none other than Christ, who is our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and not the king after the order of Melchizedek. Our Lord was never hailed as the king of Melchizedek, but currently He is our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. We have no king, but we have a High Priest and we have the bread and the wine depicting eternal life. We don’t need the ephod as its spiritual qualities are donated by both the wine (alcohol) and the bread with no yeast in its dough. The ephod resided at Ophrah and together they transmit our dispensation of grace.

During the time of Gideon and even today, the people are clueless regarding the real implications of the ephod, and quickly it landed in the hands of those who wanted to destroy its real impact. They spoiled it. Another example is the seraph or the copper snake as the snake also displays the qualities of the resurrected Christ, healing the people. Sadly that was also used for their idolatry. 2 Kings 18:4.

∗ Gideon's son Abimelech went to Shechem to make himself king, and he disdained the ephod. Shechem pictures our Church, as our Lord did meet the Samaritan woman there, and close to the oak is the land Jacob once bought. When Abimelech was anointed as king, it pictures the time of the Church. His youngest brother Jotham dared to see him face to face. He was the only remaining son who hid himself when Abimelech slaughtered all of Gideon’s sons. Jotham told him the first parable in the Bible. Each parable whether in the Old or the New Testament pictures the Church. Abimelech wanted to rule Israel, and symbolically it is the Church, as that happened at Shechem. It says the olive tree with its healing oil refused the kingdom and similarly the vine with its fruit; or the fig tree with its earthly blessings. They all refused to be king as the time was not right. In the end the thorn tree with all its curses agreed wholeheartedly to rule the Church or the people during the time of the Judges. The first time we read of the thorn tree is when it burned, and then Moses was called to free Israel. The tree epitomises the law of Moses, and its many curses, and to be subjugated to its many rules is to curse ourselves. We need the fruits of the olive, vine and fig tree. If we disdain the ephod and desire to see our Lord ruling our doomed world, we will end with the thorn tree. It will end with either the Pope or a minister ruling the Church. There is not a great difference as with both of them, they are placed beneath the yoke of the law. If any believer on earth is ruled by another person, he shelters in the thorn tree with its many thorns. When our Lord ended the rule of the law, he had a crown of thorns on His head. To return to our beginnings is to return to the first principles of the world. Paul had a great disdain for

those who wanted to be subservient to other people. How can they accommodate the people who wanted to torture them with the thorns?
* The third time the ephod is mentioned is when Micah made one.
* The fourth time is when Samuel ministered as a child before the Lord, and he was girded with a linen ephod. 1 Sam. 2:18. Samuel was sent to Eli, who was the High Priest of his time. In a remarkable way, Samuel was clothed in an ephod, and even though he was not one of Eli's sons, he was hailed as one. He was taught by Eli and called a priest. We will learn that he became one, circumventing the priesthood belonging to Aaron. Without a doubt, Samuel does illustrate to us a priesthood far greater than the one of Aaron. He pictured Christ as our High Priest. There is a relationship between Samuel and our Lord Jesus. Samuel was born and did lie in the arms of Hannah his mother, and similarly after our Lord was born He did lay in the arms of Anna. Luke 2:36-38 (similar to Hannah). Anna was then 84 years old, and she never left the temple and remained there day and night, until she saw and held the baby Jesus. She was not the mother of our Lord Jesus, but there is a similarity. Both were born from a barren mother, the one because there was a medical reason, and the other because she had no man. If a woman knows no man, then she is reckoned as infertile. Both were born from an infertile woman, and were dedicated to the Lord Jehovah at the temple. Our Lord once said that whatever is born first of the womb is His.
'Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.' Ex. 13:2.
That is the reason why both the Lord Jesus and Samuel were dedicated at the temple. There are more similarities:
Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim and his name was Elkanah. 1 Sam. 1:1. Elkanah was the father of Samuel and Ramathaim in the Old Testament is similar to Arimathaea of the New Testament. There is a bond between the Lord Jesus and Samuel as they are from the same hill country.
'Joseph of Arimathea was a prominent member of the Jewish Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. He was not afraid and he went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ' Mark 15:43.
The genealogy of Joseph of Arimathea asserts that Joseph was a relative of Jesus; specifically, Mary's uncle. Hearsay says that when Joseph set his walking staff on the ground to sleep, it miraculously rooted, leafed out, and blossomed as the renowned Glastonbury thorn.
Ramathaim in Hebrew means a double height and Ephraim means a double fruit. Our Lord was born at Ephratah, meaning a place of fruitfulness.
'But you, Bethlehem Ephratah, (place of fruitfulness) though you are small among the clans of
Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel. ' Mic. 5:2.
Whether it is the 'double height', the 'double fruit' or the place of fruitfulness, they all convey a similar message portraying the richness of our blessings in Christ. If we study the word Ramathaim from back to front, we have an anagram of the word, meaning marah or bitterness.

When the Israelites had a great thirst, and they found the water at Marah, they discovered it was bitter. Marah means ‘bitterness.’ Exo. 15:23. When we do savour the blessing we do have in heaven, it will be sweet to our palate, but once it is swallowed, and it reaches our stomach, it will become bitter. (Marah) Our heavenly blessings will leave an aftertaste not pleasant for our earthly prospects. There may be 2 peaks on mount Ramathaim, but the double height implies that it reaches high into the heavens.
Samuel’s ancestors were from Zuph, the Ephraimite, 1 Sam. 1:1 and the name Zuph means honeycomb. Honey has to do with Samson, who portrays the true wisdom of God throughout our dispensation. If we do eat honey it will sweeten our palate but once inside our stomach it tends to become bitter. It is the bitterness of Marah. There is a great bond between Samuel and the Lord Jesus. Samuel was girded by the linen ephod, and similarly our Lord who portrays the meaning of ephod when he girded Himself with the linen towel to anoint the disciples' feet. It is His duty to cleanse us, and that is arranged outside the priesthood of Aaron.
It says that God chose Aaron from amongst the tribes of Israel to be His priest to offer sacrifices, burn incense, and to wear an ephod. 1 Sam. 2:28. 10 verses later (in the same chapter) it says that Samuel wore the ephod, and that is clearly a duty belonging to the priesthood of Aaron. The ephod has to do with Aaron high priestly duties. Eli was eligible to wear the ephod but why Samuel, and what sort of priesthood is this? He portrays a different priesthood namely the High Priesthood of Melchizedek and not of Aaron.
That priesthood circumvents Aaron. There were many more priests besides that of Aaron’s, as Jethro, Jether the eldest son of Gideon and many more. Samuel wearing the ephod needs to alert us that besides the priesthood of Aaron or Eli and his sons, there is another, and they all convey Christ Priestly duties for us today. Most Christians today are oblivious of the Priesthood of Christ, even though it is long-established in the Old Testament.

The next to wear the ephod was King David. He fled from Saul who portrays the law of Moses. When Saul pursued David he sheltered at Nob. Remember then David was the anointed king, but he had to wait until Saul died. At Nob David was given the 12 showbreads to eat, and they used to be in the sanctuary upon the golden table. Every Sabbath day the breads were changed, and then David was given the bread, as he was reckoned as a priest. The bread could only be eaten by the priest, and during our Lord’s sojourn on earth, He mentioned this occasion. Matt. 12:4.
Afterwards David searched for a weapon and Ahimelech told him he can have the hidden sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom he killed in the Valley of Elah.
The sword was wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod, and it was given to David. 1 Sam. 21:9. The sword of Goliath was hidden in a cloth behind the ephod. It did not matter where the sword was, but there is a reason. Today Christ High Priestly duty for us is portrayed by the ephod. Behind the ephod pictures the future when Christ will be the king of the world and

then another Goliath will be slain. In the Book of Revelation, he is known as the antichrist. Ch. 13. The last Goliath will be a Philistine, and he too will be a giant, and as of old he be known as the ‘mighty men who were of old, men of renown.’ Gen. 6:4. Goliath was 6 cubits tall and a span, meaning he wanted to be greater or exceed the number 6.
The sequence is first the ephod and then the sword. Today we live in the time of the ephod and the sword is hidden, but later the antichrist (Goliath) and all the nations that revered him will be slain; but as for now the sword is hidden behind the ephod.
Later in history David did wear the ephod when he danced before the Lord with all his might, wearing a linen ephod. 2 Sam. 6:14; 1 Chron. 15:27. Who else in the Bible danced and jumped with joy? It was the lame man, who was impotent, having no life inside of him. He danced to heaven for a better life. David leaped and danced, portraying the risen Christ, who is destined for heaven. He jumped with all his might to symbolise the risen Christ.
Paul wants us to grasp the incredible greatness of his power, for us who believe him; it is the same power that raised Christ from the dead. Eph. 1:19,20.
His great work for us is expressed when He girded Himself with the linen towel, washing the disciples' feet. To be girded with either the linen or the leather is the same – as they both depict the risen Christ. Peter was a leather tanner Acts 10:32 and the Apostle Paul a tentmaker. Acts 18:3. Previously the tents were made from leather, so both Peter and Paul had a very similar occupation. The leather also depicts the new as the skin of the diseased animal is removed, using them to create leather bags, to preserve the new wine of the new covenant. Luke 5:38. Both the linen and the leather do portray the same awareness.
When David fetched the ark he wore the linen ephod, and it pictured him as Christ, and Michal the daughter of Saul taunted him saying when he danced, he exposed himself to the servant girls like any indecent man. 2 Sam. 6:16.
Before the ark was returned to Jerusalem, something went awfully wrong, and Uzzah died. 2 Sam. 6:1-12. David then planned to take the ark to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the Lord blessed him and his entire household. That portrays the time of the Church. Appropriately they placed the ark on a new wagon with its wheels portraying rebirth, as the word wheel is tied to the word Gilgal. The new wagon is the new covenant and two brothers were chosen to ensure the safety of the ark. That moment in time when David wanted the ark to return to Jerusalem corresponds to the time of Christ resurrection as the scene was set for Israel to receive their Messiah, but Judah stumbled. The oxen that pulled the ark hesitated and the sheer weight of the ark made it nearly fall. Uzzah was alert and quickly responded to counterbalance the weight of the ark, but he died instantaneously. His brother was Ahio, and he lived. Both Uzzah and Ahio portray the king and the high priest, and together they are similar to Moses and Aaron. Uzzah, who died, depicts the Lord who ascended into heaven leaving behind Ahio or the high priest, as that pictures Christ today interceding for us in

heaven. For the time being Christ did set aside his rights to become king. That is the reason for the 3 months delay when the ark was stationed at Obed-Edom.
There were more brothers like Moses and Aaron, and we will discover that both king David and the high priest Ahimelech at Nob were brothers. The name Ahimelech means ‘my brother is king.’ If David is King then Ahimelech is his brother. The high priest is aptly named my brother is king. The ark stumbled at Nachon's threshing floor, and that is where king (Uzzah) died. The threshing floor has to do with our offerings to God, portraying the death and resurrection. At that threshing floor, where Boaz met Ruth, and with that marriage, Obed was born who is the grandfather of king David. The offerings at the temple were on that same Mount Moriah. Uzzah may have died, but I believe his life was an offering to God, and we can conclude that the ark is saved, and for the time being the king or our Lord disappeared to heaven.
The oxen that stumbled is due to the sheer weight of the laws of Moses. Did God's people stumble to fall beyond recovery? Of course not! His purpose was to make His salvation accessible to the Gentiles, and then the Jews would be jealous and want it for themselves. Rom. 11:11. The ark is the Messiah, and we are blessed with it. Presently there is no communication between God (King) and the world but we do have a High Priest. Presently the Anointed or the King is ‘cut off’ Dan. 9:26 and we are left with Ahio, and we may ask what will happen next? David became angry because of the Lord's outburst against Uzzah, and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah to that day. 2 Sam. 6:8. Unknown to David there will be a breach in the history of Israel, and the word Perez confirms that break portraying again our dispensation of grace. That is not the first mention of the word Perez as in the Book Genesis 38 a complete chapter hinges on the meaning of that word. Tamar had a twin son, and as they were born, one of them reached out his hand, and the midwife tied a scarlet thread to the wrist of the child. He appeared to be the first, but then he drew back his hand, and then the other twin brother was born first. The midwife was surprised asking how did he break out first? The first child to be born was Perez, and the baby with the scarlet thread on his wrist was called Zerah. Perez the first son caused a delay in the birth of the second son who had the scarlet around his wrist. Perez portrays our dispensation of grace lasting 2000 years and Zerah portrays reborn Israel after the rapture of the Church. Zerah had a hand stretched out, and that is the hand of God's grace, giving us light. Early in Israel’s history Judah rejected the claims of Christ, Acts 1&2 and then God withdrew His hand, to bless Perez. The break is our dispensation and the world will question God, as there is no proof of His interference in our world. His hand is withdrawn and acceptably He is only occupied with the Church. The reason is the world rejected Him.
The Ark of the LORD remained with the family of Obed-edom for three months, and the Lord blessed him and his entire household. 2 Sam. 6:11. David feared the anger of the Lord and he decided to leave the ark at Obed-Edom. He was despondent, realising there was a break in his plans. But to his surprise, the family was blessed.

In Hebrew, the word Obed means a servant, to labour or to work and Edom are the descendants of Esau, who is the twin brother of Jacob or Israel. They are known as the Edomites.
Israel is divided into two nations known as either Judah or Ephraim. Many today believe that the blessings ended with Judah, but surprisingly it will end with Ephraim. If we do reckon with the descendants of Isaac, we have two contenders as the one is Jacob, and the other is Edom; we thought the blessings were bestowed on Jacob or the Jews, but it ended with Edom. The ark needed to be in Israel, but it ended with Edom, and that is mere typology as Obed-Edom might have been an Israelite. In this history, the ark went to an Edomite.
Instead of Israel being blessed, it went to the other family or Edom. Strangely the Edomites had 11 dukes, Gen. 36:15 and again the 11 make us think of the Church or the delay of our dispensation. The Messiah was from Judah and born in Bethlehem, but in future He will come from Edom! 'Who is that that comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength?' Isa. 63:1.
The mighty one is Christ coming from Bozrah, and it's the sheltering place for the remnant at Petra or Selah. Petra used to be the capital of the Edomites and there the Lord will meet Israel. It is outside the boundaries of Israel, and early in the times of the great tribulation, the 2 witnesses begged the Israelites to leave Jerusalem to go to a place in the desert. Rev. 11. That may sound strange but with Christ return He will firstly attend to the gathering of the remnant at Edom. (Petra) From there we will follow the kingly route to Jerusalem, with Christ on the front. I previously mentioned that, throughout the great tribulation, Petra will be a safe haven for the remnant who are encouraged by the 2 witnesses at Jerusalem, to leave Israel to flee to the desert. (Petra) It's only possible to flee during the first 3½ years of Daniel's 70th week but not in the latter half. The first 3½ years compares to the time of Joseph when Israel had plenty, but the last 3½ years was a time of drought, and that can be compared to the frightful time of Israel's tribulation. Joseph did make himself known to Israel or his brothers in the second year of the great drought, and I believe that early during the latter 3½ years of the tribulation, the Lord will reveal Himself to Israel – not at Jerusalem but rather at Petra. Then Petra will be sealed off from the outside world, and no person can either enter or leave Petra.
Esau (Edom) will shelter Jacob. (Israel)
In Scripture Edom is mentioned frequently (more than 100 times) and when we stumble on the name we need to ask ourselves is God speaking to Edom, natural Israel or even the Church living amongst the nations? The ark remained at Obed-Edom for 3 months and in the 3rd month the ark returned to Jerusalem. Christ rose on the third day, and after our time of waiting or the 2000 years, then Israel will repent and the Millennium will commence with a temple at Jerusalem. Eze. 40-48.
Micah made an ephod and a teraphim.
What is a teraphim, and what does it suggest if it is written in the plural, ending with the letter 'im'? It does not say there are more than one

teraphim as the name Ephraim also ends with the words ‘im’. The teraphim could either be small or large, and somehow the people always searched for them.

• The first occurrence of the word is in the Book Genesis, Ch. 31 when Laban thoroughly searched for it, but he failed to find it in the convoy Jacob had when he left Laban. Jacob left Laban after he worked there for 20 years, and he wanted to return to his home country. Similarly, we will discover that the ark remained for 20 years in Kiriath-jearim, before David ventured to return it to Jerusalem. At a time when Jacob was about to leave Laban, and he was some distance away shearing the sheep, then Rachel (the wife of Jacob) stole her father's teraphim, and she took it with her. They set out secretly and never told Laban about their plans to leave him. Gen. 31:19-20.

To us stealing is a very negative phrase, but stealing in the 'old' English language is not that harsh. To steal is to take something secretively, without the prior knowledge of the other. If it's improper remains a question. Today the true meaning of the word stealing is to take something, knowing you should not have taken it. It is downright wrong. Maybe Laban was too remote shearing his sheep in the field, and Rachel had no time to ask her father, or to discuss the matter. There is an American Negro spiritual song, saying to steal away to Jesus. We are called to go to Jesus without the prior approval of any other person. Rachel could have asked her dad, but she took the family heritage, to bless the children of Israel. The words teraphim, cherubs, seraphim and many more examples are all transliterated from the original Hebrew words and the translators did not even attempt to translate them, as they all speak of the hidden Christ.

Rachel is the mother of Joseph and Ephraim, and in this chapter Micah from Ephraim ventured to make an ephod, as it seemed to run in the family. It appeared to be a family treasure on the side of Joseph or Rachel. Rachel was concerned about the teraphim, and later in the Book Judges we will read that Benjamin was also involved with the teraphim. Both Ephraim and Benjamin have the same mother Rachel. Her motives are questionable, and it’s wrong to outrightly condemn her deeds. Rachel did hide the teraphim, stuffing them inside her camel saddle, and she did sit on them. Even though Laban searched all the tents, he couldn't find it. v. 34. We will discover that throughout Scripture, the teraphim are always hidden, or people are searching them.

Laban, who wanted to finally say goodbye to both Jacob and his daughters, also searched for the teraphim, and Rachel told her father she cannot rise as she had her monthly periods. Many think that Rachel lied about the teraphim and also about her monthly periods. She was technically infertile having her period, and she refused to stand.

That is similar to the mother of Micah, who searched thoroughly and cannot find the 1100 silver pieces that were gone. It is Israel living in the days of the Old Testament, as they searched continuously for the teraphim that were hidden, or the Scriptures, but yet they failed to find them. The reason is they did not receive Christ, and they should have searched the Scriptures. Presently Judah is infertile as they declined the redemptive

work of Christ, or the blessings that were entrusted to them.
Many deem the teraphim with contempt, thinking the household god is merely there to make the people stumble. To me it has a far greater implication as it is the hidden Christ. The truth is it was formerly hidden in the Old Testament, but now it is made known by the name 'teraphim. ' Israel always carried the teraphim, and they had the knowledge – but they didn't find it. It is a type of a hidden Christ and them searching the teraphim is evidence they failed to find Him, and now they are left barren. Even today there are many hidden truths in the Old Testament, and I am certain that each page hides a teraphim. If we fail to recognise Christ, we will never develop and become impotent like the lame man.
• The second time the teraphim is mentioned is Micah, who made it from the previous hidden 1100 silver coins. Later the tribe of Dan took the teraphim, and they did it without the prior knowledge of Micah. They took the ephod, teraphim and the Levite priest with them to the north.
• The third time it's mentioned it is in regard to Saul:
For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king. 1 Sam. 15:23. Saul symbolises Israel living under the law, and the kingdom shall be taken away from him. He rejected the Word and the teraphim (the resurrected Christ) and it will never suit him. The old covenant or the rule of Saul will catapult.
• The fourth time it is mentioned with respect to David fleeing King Saul:
And Michal took the teraphim, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair at the head thereof, and covered it with the clothes…. . And when the messengers came in, behold, the teraphim was in the bed, with the pillow of goats' hair at the head thereof. 1 Sam. 19:16, 19.
Now we can get an idea of what the teraphim is. The teraphim is David, who is missing, or the hidden. It is Christ in heaven. Presently during our time, Christ is hidden but He is also found in each page of the Old Testament. If we don't appreciate this, the remainder of the book Judges will be impossible to grasp. Saul chased David and Michal helped to disguise David, she helped him to leave through the window. In Scripture, many people escaped via the window. The window used to be a vertical escape route and symbolically it is the way to heaven, and the door is a hole in the wall. Michal took the teraphim, translated as an image and she hid it in a bed, and took a pillow with goat's hair. We also escaped via a window to heaven, and not the door. Noah's ark had a vertical window, and he could only look at the sky, and not the soaked earth.
When Saul's men arrived to surprise David, they discovered it was not David but only a teraphim in the bed with a cushioned goat's hair as its head. In the past when Isaac had to bless his firstborn, Jacob disguised himself with the hide of a goat. Saul thought he caught David, but he left despondently and continually searched for him. They will never find him if they adhere to the laws of Moses. They told Saul; David is ill v. 14 and in Hebrew the word teraphim is derived from the word rapha St. no. 7495 meaning to be healed. With an image in David's bed, the people thought it was to restore him to health. The Lord spoke through Moses and said: I am the Lord, who heals you. Ex. 15:26. They searched David or the Lord, and

what did they find? The teraphim or the Lord, who heals us. He gave us eternal life but for now they will never find him as He is hidden.
In the past, the teraphim was abused by Israel, as an image for idolatry, as the ephod in Gideon's time; and the golden calf of Aaron. The teraphim transfers the unknown, and they had no idea what it meant, and not grasping its real value, it became part of their idolatry. Twice it says that the teraphim portrays David as he was the anointed (high priest) and not the king.
• Furthermore, Josiah got rid of the mediums and spiritualists, the household gods, the teraphim and all the other detestable things seen in Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Kings 23:24.
Josiah got rid of all the household gods and the teraphim, and they were in their houses for their idolatry.
For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he shook the arrows to and fro, he consulted the teraphim, he looked in the liver. Eze. 21:21.
The teraphim were used for their divination. The commentators agree it was for their health, their omen or divination.
For the teraphim (idols) speak iniquity, and the diviners see lying visions and fabricate false dreams; they comfort in vain. Therefore, the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd. Zech. 10:2. The diviners gain their so called insight by reading signs, events, omens, or through alleged contact with the supernatural.
• For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and teraphim. Hos. 3:4.
That passage in the Book Hosea is referred to many a time in the New Testament. It pictures a difficult ethical issue regarding Hosea who had to marry a whore. The Lord had a good reason as Hosea had to marry a woman (Gomer) who turned to other men. The Lord told Hosea to go and marry a prostitute, to prove that some of her children will be born from other men. That will illustrate their unfaithfulness to God as they openly committed adultery, worshipping other gods. Hos. 1:2. Afterwards Gomer did leave Hosea and disappeared with one of her 'other men,' and similarly Israel disappeared and became unfaithful to God. Their sons were named Lo-Ammi; Lo-Ruhamah and Jezreel, projecting the sad state of Israel.
Then the Lord told Hosea to buy his wife a second time. Bring her back to you and love her, even though she loves adultery. For the Lord still loves Israel even though the people have turned to other gods, offering them choice gifts. So I bought her back for fifteen pieces of silver and about five bushels of barley and a measure of wine. Hos. 3:1,2.
Most commentators agree that Hosea did procure his previous estranged wife who remained unfaithful to him.
Hosea brought her back, and the 15 pieces of silver is the redemption price that came via Christ death and resurrection. There will be a reborn Israel and since Christ redemptive work, they will remain for many days without any man. In the Old Testament Israel did worship strange gods but since Christ resurrection they did not obey the gods of the heathen

people, but they refused the resurrected Christ.
Throughout our dispensation, the children of Israel shall be without a king. There is a king, but there is no practical marriage as He is in heaven. They will be without a prince, and coincidentally if any in Israel today wanted a crown prince, they do have records that will lead them to the risen Christ. Many nations do have a prince, but they are no kings. The only One who can rightfully claim the throne is Christ and He is alive today. Israel has no choice but to accept Christ; as they all agree with the line of ancestors as recorded in Matthew 1. Israel will be without sacrifice as the perfect offering is Christ, and He already ascended to God in heaven. Besides him, there is no one else.
Israel will be without an erect image whether they are menhirs, obelisks or standing stones as they all portray the risen Christ. They will be without the large stone beneath the oak.
'So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem… Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak. ' Jos. 24:25, 26.
On multiple occasions, Israel did erect stones, as with the death of Absalom. Our hope is focused on things above, and therefore the reason why the stones do stand upright.
Israel shall be without an ephod as Christ is the only High Priest. In the same breath, it mentions the teraphim as they are one and the same. The wording is as follows: For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod and teraphim. Hos. 3:4.
It is clear that the Book regards both the ephod and teraphim as equal as they are mentioned in the same breath. That same sort of structure we find in the Book Ephesians: And He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. Eph. 4:11. Fundamentally both the teachers and the pastors are alike as they lead the flock to the pastures or the Word of God. Christ our High Priest and the ephod portrays that; thus the teraphim has an equal meaning. It circumvents the laws of Moses, and the priestly task of Aaron. If ever David the king is lost, then we will acquaint ourselves with the High Priest or the teraphim, but the religious world will always grope in the dark as to where the teraphim is, but we are acquainted with its meaning and its whereabouts.
Uzzah died besides the ark but now we have Ahio, the high priest or his brother. Presently Christ is in heaven and it is like the raised serpent in the wilderness – and what was the use of the snake in the desert? – it was for the healing of the nation. The teraphim was also for the healing of the nation. The nation of Israel is without the ephod or the teraphim, but we have both a King and a High Priest. That is not spelled out, but we need to use our common sense. As the teraphim is hidden, we will likewise find that Ahio is hidden, as his name is never mentioned again, but he lives as a priest.
Israel lost the teraphim and the ephod, but in contrast we secured them for our use.
Above all, we have a king, and we sing that wholeheartedly that we are

the children of the king. He is both our High Priest and king. We do know He is the prince, and we do have an offering as we need to give our bodies; we can offer to God and the Book Hebrews says we do have an altar. Heb. 13:10. Christ is our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and it sidesteps the priestly order of Aaron. We do have an image, and the image is a pillar or a table likened to the golden table in the sanctuary; it lifts our offerings to God.
We are also familiar with the Lord's Table as it is raised, we share the bread and the wine. 1 Cor. 10:21. There is real fellowship between us and Christ.
To summarise we have an ephod as we do have a High Priest, and Christ did give Himself for us and not the world. Nowhere in the Bible do we read that Christ has any obligations towards the world, but it says that He gave His life to free the Church from every kind of sin to cleanse us and to make us His very own people. Tit. 2:14. That is epitomised by the tight fitting ephod with regards to the Church. Afterward the children of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David will be their king. Hos. 3:5.
We now search for the things we know are missing as the teraphim. For the past 2000 years, Israel did search for the teraphim not trusting Christ. (Micah) Without Him, they will search endlessly. After the rapture, they will look afresh for Him, but on the day of the Lord or when He returns, the people of Israel will stumble upon King David: They will find Him and fearfully they will approach Jehovah, asking Him what are the wounds in Your hands and feet. The teraphim is indeed our Lord, and if Israel had to search anew as Laban and Saul, they will discover the truth. Throughout the time of the Church lasting 2000 years, Gomer the estranged woman of Hosea is bought with a price, and then Judah is secluded having no man, distant from the blessings we enjoy.
Micah made both the ephod and the teraphim as together they picture the same idea; it is Christ or the new covenant, and that is outside the scope of the old covenant. In the Old Testament, we have many symbols as the serpent in the wilderness, the ephod and teraphim and not to mention the golden calf that was moulded by Aaron. The golden calf pictured the next or the second generation, who is Christ, and their rationale was honourable, but sadly they misused it as they were clueless not understanding the real symbolism.
Then Micah made one of his sons a priest. In one translation, it says that 'he filled the hands of one of his sons, and he became his priest.' Jud. 17:5. That means to 'consecrate' them, and they will receive something meaningful, something to captivate their thoughts, to equip them as a priest. They will have something to offer to God. We are familiar with the song; must I go, and empty handed, must I meet my Saviour so? That song is so out of tune to those who believe that their hands are filled with God's exceeding riches. Eph. 2:7. If we belong to Christ, we will never be empty handed.
The son of Micah is the following generation that depicts the priesthood of Christ. The Son of God will be our High Priest.
'In those days Israel had no king, so the people did whatever seemed right

in their own eyes.’ That verse seems to divide this chapter into two. It commenced with the 1100 pieces, and it seems to be with Micah. The truths that used to be hidden by Israel is made known by Micah or Christ. From the 1100 pieces of silver a religion is initiated that was forbidden by the laws of the old covenant, but they did glorify God. What used to be hidden in the mother is made manifest by the son, and via him they worshipped God. The mother was oblivious of the new covenant, but the son revealed everything. What was once hidden in the Old Testament will be revealed after the death and resurrection of our Lord. Via Micah those truths are captured by Ephraim, who epitomises
Christ. Everything is revealed to us, and the message is so wonderful that even the angels desire to look into them. 1 Pet. 1:12.
One day a young Levite man from Bethlehem, who lived in Judah visited the neighbourhood of Ephraim. He looked for a good place to live at. He happened to stop at Micah's house looking for work.
Micah asked him; where are you from? and he told him I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am looking for a place to live. Micah begged him to stay with him and said: You can be a father and priest to me. I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, plus a change of clothes and your food. The Levite agreed to that, so he became like one of Micah's own sons. Micah ordained the Levite as his personal priest, and he lived in Micah's house. Micah knew the Lord will bless him because he had a Levite serving as his priest.
Some will argue that the Levite cannot come from Bethlehem as it was not a town belonging to the Levites, but that assumption is wrong. The Levites were dispersed among all the tribes of Israel, and as a Levite that man had to serve the tribe of Judah. The Levites today will be considered as social workers who cared for the people and that Levite lived amongst the tribe of Judah and nothing more. Now we are familiar with the surname Cohen, (meaning a priest), and we can be assured he will be a Jew and also a Levite, living amongst the Jewish people. He is reckoned as one of the Israelites as Caleb, who was born a heathen. Now the Jewish nation are known as the 2½ tribes and why are the 10 lost tribes not known as the 10½ lost tribes of Israel? The 2½ tribes are Judah, Benjamin and some of the Levites’ people. Similarly the 10½ lost tribes will be mostly from Israel and also some Levites. Levi is the 13th tribe, and they had no land.
The Levite from Bethlehem Judah reminds us of Bethlehem ‘the house of the bread’; and we may ask who the bread is? The bread pictures Melchizedek:
‘And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine.’ Gen. 14:18.
Our Lord, who was born in Bethlehem, will procure the bread of life. The threshing floor of Araunah is well-known as David bought that threshing floor to build an altar to the Lord. 2 Sam. 24:21. At the same threshing floor, both Boaz and Ruth met one another and that is where Obed was conceived, and he is the grandfather of king David. Ruth 3:14. It happened to be the place they make bread. There is a definite relationship between Abraham and David, and that place do bring together the two great men of the Old Testament.

Mount Moriah is where Abraham offered his only son Isaac. Gen. 22:1, 2. We find another Bethlehem in the north belonging to Zebulun, but this Bethlehem is in Judah belonging to Boaz and Obed. The man was from the tribe of Judah, but he remained a Levite. He was a young man meaning a person who received ‘new life’ as he is reborn. Absalom was also called the 'young man' and repeatedly David named him as such, (x5) even though he was old. He portrayed the next generation. Naaman the commander-in-chief of the army of Syria was stricken with leprosy, and he went to Elisha. Eventually he followed the instructions of the ‘young man’ and he was cured. It said when he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, his flesh was restored, and his skin looked as if he was a young boy. 2 Kings 5:14. That portrays our rebirth.
Bethlehem is the city of David and from Judah will ascend a Prince and Boaz is one of the crown princes. David descended from that marriage. Our Lord was from Bethlehem and was He a Levite? He was from Judah, but He had something in common with Levi, as in the Old Testament there were prophecies regarding Levi and he had to be the One to establish a new covenant. In the Book Malachi, we read that His covenant with the Levites will persist. Clearly that Levite is Christ as the law of truth was in his mouth, and no injustice was found on his lips. In peace and equity He communed with God and turned many away from iniquity. He will be the real Messenger of God, and that is the meaning of the word Malachi. Mal. 2:4-7. The stranger was a Levite, and he was endowed with the priesthood. He was from Bethlehem Judah, and he went to seek and to save those who were lost. Luke 11:9. The young Levite in the Book Judges searched continuously to accomplish his duty as a Levite.
He pictures our Lord when the religious leaders of Judah refused to acknowledge Him; He went as a stranger to both Galilee and Samaria, to do His priestly duty. As a Levite, our Lord left Judah to work amongst the tribe of Ephraim and He frequently went there.
Our Lord was from Judah and as an example; He went to the house of Ephraim to visit the woman at the well. Our Lord is a Priest from Judah and as the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek; He did circumvent the priestly order of Moses. He searched for the sheep from the other fold finding His way to Ephraim. The name Levi is to simulate Christ as our High Priest.
The Book Judges can be divided into 2 histories.

• Chapter 17 and 18 commences with a priesthood that was started by Micah, and it was impounded upon by the tribe of Dan. The 2 Levites is Christ, and they journeyed from Judah to Ephraim and later they went with the tribe Dan to the upper north; to be their priest. The tribe of Dan has many things in common with Ephraim, and they are usually mentioned together.
• The final history of the Book follows from chapter 19 to 21, and it concerns Benjamin, with a complete different setting, but both had something in common. It concerned a man from Bethlehem Judah who was a Levite. This history ended with Benjamin and we will discover there is a bond between the tribes of Ephraim, Dan and Benjamin.

The priest from Levi became the bonding factor, as the last five chapters of the Book is absorbed by the two Levite men.
Ephraim is the firstborn and later in the Book Judges the tribe of Benjamin was nearly murdered to extinction. Ephraim had the double portion and remember Benjamin had 5 portions, and he received them from Joseph. When Joseph ruled Egypt with Pharaoh, he gave each of his brother's new clothes--but to Benjamin he gave five changes of clothing and three hundred pieces of silver. Gen. 45:22. That is besides the silver mug. Gen. 44:2. Benjamin portrays the remnant from Israel and it could be either the Church, or reborn Israel on the day of the Lord, whereas Ephraim portrays the firstborn right of the Church. Benjamin had a task within the tribe of Judah; and what Benjamin did for Judah, Dan did for the 10 lost tribes of Israel.
Chapters 17 and 18 ended with Dan and similarly Judges 19 to 21 ended with the tribe of Benjamin.
They have a similar message, but they may have different names and meaning but they do end with the same truths. That is concluded by the remarkable man from Bethlehem Judah or Christ. The young Levite from Bethlehem portrays the Priesthood of Christ (Levi) and also of Christ the King, coming from Judah. He indeed is the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.
In Hebrew, the word Levi means to bond together, and He is the one to unite what was torn apart. The man departed from Judah 17:8 and he will seek the lost sheep as a shepherd in John 10. As the man left Judah, he portrays the Lord seeking the sheep from another fold, John 10:16 attending to the needs of Ephraim or the Church.
As the Levite reached Ephraim, Micah asked him where he was from. Our beginnings will determine our destination. It is better to question where we come from than to ask what our final destination is. It is wrong to think if we attempt to do well; we will better ourselves and that goes hand in hand with the philosophy of evolution; it is glued to the world's thinking. The world reasons amongst themselves as they are not certain why they are on mother earth, but they will progress, as if they are on the trot. We will soon discover that the old man will sink in the mud and the more we move, the greater the risk of disappearing in the quicksand. We are from the earth, and we will return to the earth. We need to ask where are we coming from? Are we born from above? If we are born from above our destiny is heaven. Micah could have asked him are you from heaven or Bethlehem Judah? The Levite is born of God, and He is the true High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He will amalgamate all the tribes of Israel, causing the redemption to bind us to God; whether we are Jews or Gentiles; from Judah or Ephraim; slaves or free.
The Levite was a Jew, and he resided in Ephraim serving them, to unite Judah with Ephraim. We as the Church are the bridegroom with Christ, and the earthly nation of Israel will be the bride. The Church with Christ is the bridegroom and will unite in marriage with a new reborn Israel. In this relationship, we are one with Christ.
Behold, on the mountains the feet of Him who brings good news, who announces peace! Nah. 1:15. He had the good tidings and He is known as

Jesus of Nazareth. He was famous in that district, even though He was not born there. Coming from Nazareth has to do with Him being a Nazirite as Samson. Our Lord was born at Bethlehem meaning at the ‘house of the bread’, as He is the living bread.
The man says he is a Levite, and he searched for a place to develop his skills as a priest. Micah told him to stay with him and to remain with them both as a father and a priest. The next verse says that the young man became like one of his sons. We may question whether there is a difference between the Levite being a father or a son. There is no difference, as the father gives and the son receives. He can be both a father (to give) and a son (to receive). The concept of a father is not only to procure life, but he is also the one who teaches us.
A typical example is Jubal, as he was the 'father' of all those who play the harp and flute (Gen. 4:21). Similarly, a prophet is also a father. Joash, the king of Israel, wept when he went down to Elisha, who had died, and cried, ‘My father, my father’, even though there was no family tie (2 Kings 13:14). We can argue that Micah embodies the duty of the king and Levi the priest. Together they are Christ, and the one depends on the other.
The 10 pieces of silver that were paid to the Levite portray the Word of God. The 10 are the promises found in His Word, and in faith we can claim them. Personally, I believe the Levite was paid more. Most commentators share the view that his wages were scandalous. Figuratively, the silver speaks of redemption, and it is always used as redemption money. A price is fixed, as with Hosea, who had to redeem his wife Gomer.
The Levite was clothed with the glory of Micah, as he clothed him. He was fit to wear the ephod, and Micah paid his daily expenses.
The redemption is from the Jews (John 4:22), and it ended with the 10 tribes or Samaria, picturing Ephraim or the Church as the firstborn. As Christ is part of the Church, similarly the Levite is part of Ephraim or the Church.
Again, it stresses that the Levite was from Judah, and his duties ended with Ephraim or the 10 lost tribes.
Ephraim or Micah knew the Lord would bless him when he said, because I have a Levite serving as my priest. Similarly, the Lord will do us good, as He is our High Priest and He will equip us. He is our head, and we are part of His house. We live in the mountains of Ephraim, but our salvation was from Judah.

Judges 18

The Hidden Christ & Church Inheritance

Beneath the corruption lies glorious foreshadowing of our dispensation (Church age/mystery/"waiting"):

- Five scouts → Grace (5) revealing hidden truths; Church "spying out" heavenly inheritance (like Caleb/Joshua).
- Micah's shrine raided → Truths (epho/teraphim = hidden Christ/priestly glory) transferred from private/idolatrous (law-era misuse) to tribal/northern (scattered believers/Church claiming them).
- Levite (Jonathan son of Gershom/Moses, linked Manasseh via suspended nun) → Christ (from Judah/Bethlehem) ministering to scattered Ephraim/Dan (Church as spiritual "far off"/firstborn rights). Priesthood shifts beyond Aaron (law) to Melchizedek order (grace).
- Laish ("lion") conquered/renamed Dan → Peaceful, prosperous land = Church's secure rest in Christ (Lion of Judah, yet humbled). No allies = independence from world systems; far from Sidon ("hunting/waiting") = patient waiting for manifestation.
- Northern migration → From south (Judah/law) to far north (heavenly throne, Isa. 14:13). Dan's dual territory = Church's double portion (heaven + earth inheritance via Ephraim's firstborn rights).
- No king, yet priest → Our age exactly—no visible king (Christ hidden), but eternal High Priest interceding.

Corruption (visible religion's failure) highlights typology: True worship isn't manufactured idols/priests but hidden Christ claimed by faith (Danites take what was misused). Church "conquers" peacefully through Spirit/Word, inheriting what law-era couldn't (rest beyond Jordan).

Judges 18 masterfully contrasts false/corrupt (human) religion with true/hidden (Christ-centered)—perfect capstone to book's decline, pointing to our greater Melchizedek Priest and heavenly Dan (judging with Christ).

When Israel invaded the land of Canaan with Joshua, the tribe of Dan was allotted a place in the south, but their neighbours, the Amorites, bothered them continually, restricting their freedom. The reason is that their land was too small, and the Amorites forbade them to descend to the plains (Judges 1:34). Amongst the people from Dan, they chose five warriors who lived in the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol to scout for more land, as they felt restricted. The tribe of Dan did live above Gaza and yet westerly of Jerusalem. Two of their famous cities were Zorah and Eshtaol, and they were the cities Samson used to live in. He was born and buried there, and Samson clashed continually with the Philistines. Later in that chapter, 600 men with their wives and children moved to the uppermost north to occupy more land they had attained for the Danites. Since then, the land of Israel has been known as the land between Beersheba in the south and Dan in the uppermost north (Judg. 20:1). It was not their imperialism, but rather their lack of space, that made them hunt for more land. The Hebrew word ‘Amorites’ stems from the word ‘amar’, meaning to speak.

The Amorites personify all the powers of the unseen or Satan, as they chatter continually; they frustrate the people of God, preventing them from occupying their inheritance. Currently, Satan is ever busy smothering the real believers and diverting them away from their real inheritance, but we need to remain standing.

Even when our Lord was born at Bethlehem, there was no place for Him at the inn, and similarly the Danites felt restricted. Today our place is outside the city walls, as we have no fixed abode on earth (Heb. 13:13). The tribe of Dan did find their promised rest, but it was way up north at Laish. That ended with Dan having two provinces to live in. After the Assyrian exile in the year 722 BC, Dan again migrated to the upper north to Denmark or Scandinavia. Few people today want to live in the far upper north, as it is too cold and secluded. There is enough space and great freedom—the exact same words used to express the land of Laish.

They noticed a people living carefree lives; they were peaceful and secure. The people living there were wealthy, as their land was fertile, and they lived in remoteness far from the other main cities. A synopsis of their victory at Laish is cited in the Book of Joshua (19:47). It says that the tribe of Dan had trouble taking possession of their land close to Gaza, so they conquered the land of Laish. To settle there, they captured it, slaughtering its inhabitants. Then they renamed the city Laish as Dan, after their ancestor.

There were five chosen men from Dan to search for more land, and the number five denotes the hidden things of God, including the grace that is bestowed on us. The five warriors were meant to be within the ‘camp’, but they chose to be outside its confines. They depict the believing remnant, chosen and known as the great warriors; they were physically strong and known as having faith in God.

The men were from Zorah and Eshtaol and considered as the remnant that is chosen due to their reliance on God. They were chosen from all the people of Dan, and they sent them on a mission from Zorah and Eshtaol. Likewise, from that place Samson also commenced his mission (Jg. 13:25), and besides, he was also buried there (Jg. 16:31). Samson ruled Israel for 20 years, not forgetting the 20 years Jacob worked for Laban; and the ark of God was also kept for 20 years at Kirjath Jearim (1 Sam. 7:2) before it returned to Jerusalem. The 20 portrays our present dispensation, and after the ‘20’ things will happen. The five had an assignment to seek their inheritance, and Dan is regarded as the remnant of the 10 tribes of Israel, as Benjamin is branded as the remnant of the two tribes or the Jewish nation. In the New Testament, both Dan and Benjamin are regarded as the believing remnant, and from Benjamin King Saul was chosen. The Apostle Paul is a clear example of the remnant, and his name written in Hebrew is Saul; they both were from Benjamin, the smallest tribe of Israel.

From the tribe of Dan, the five warriors were chosen to represent all Israel, and they are regarded as the real remnant at the end of our dispensation. What the five men are for all of the people of Dan, the tribe of Dan is for all the 10 tribes of Israel. Similarly, Israel is chosen from amongst all the Gentile nations, and their duty is to steer them to the Word of God.

They were told to inspect the neighbouring land, and similarly we too are called to seek and to find. It says: ‘Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you’ (Luke 11:9).
Our inheritance and home is anchored in a place we choose to live. It is a matter of our heart, and Abram’s heart was not in the wicked city of Ur, but rather he chose to be led by God; he left Ur on God’s command. He did not know where he was going, but finally he ended in the land of Canaan. Similarly, the five men had to seek their true inheritance, as they were troubled by the neighbouring tribes. They picture the land in the north or the land they desired to possess, as if it is the promised land; thus they remind us of the 12 spies who inspected the promised land, saying it was a land overflowing with milk and honey (Num. 13).
Eshtaol means an entreaty or to make an urgent appeal. It is to solicit something from a woman, and we may ask what we desire from her? It is the 1,100 pieces of silver, and will there be more hidden treasures? Eshtaol is the burial site of Samson (Judg. 16:31). Figuratively speaking, Samson was humiliated, and he portrays our Lord in His humiliation. After studying the burial of Samson, we read of the 1,100 pieces of silver (Judg. 17:1–2), and the woman found them via Micah or Christ, and similarly the world too needs to locate the silver the woman has, who is Israel, as she is endowed with the Word of God. At first it is not obvious, but once we search more diligently, we will find that the pages of the law do guide us to the promised life.
To obey God, we need our hearts and not our hands and feet. Moses says it is not up high in heaven, and it is not buried deep in the sea; it is close to our hearts, and we merely need to heed and obey His Word (Deut. 30:10–14). The Apostle Paul says the way to get right with God is via our faith. He too says we do not need to ascend to heaven or sink to the abyss. Salvation is trusting Christ, and it is within easy reach.
In fact, the Scriptures say our righteousness is close at hand; it is on our lips and in our hearts. All we need to do is to confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord, and with our hearts we need to be convinced that God raised Him from the dead. Then we will be saved. We believe with our heart and hence we are justified, and with our mouth we confess to be saved. As the Scripture says, anyone who believes in Him will not be ashamed (Rom. 10:5–11). It is within each person’s reach!
What do we find inside a fertile woman? It is a son. Once Mary was overshadowed by the Spirit of God, and she became fertile—and that is the meaning of the word Eshtaol. Earlier in the Bible’s history, Sarah was told she would bear a son (Isaac), but she said it was impossible. Against all odds, the ‘son’ was born, and it is the Lord who will save us.
Zorah is translated as a hornet or a wasp, and they are the real enemies of the bee. It is our great enemy or Satan. Zorah can also be translated as a leprous woman. On the outside, Israel is leprous, but if we search deeper we do find a son. Early in the history of Israel, a certain woman became leprous. She was assessed by the priest, and her name is Miriam. She was the elder sister of Moses and Aaron, and if we translate her name to Greek, she is named Maria (the mother of Jesus). She became leprous but was healed (Num. 12). Maria is the woman (Israel) who is leprous, but she

did give birth to the Messiah. Together, all the Marias in the Bible epitomise the same message; it portrays the land of Israel and whatever befell them. Leprosy portrays sin, and the sin is on the surface of our skin, but not deep within us.

On the surface, Israel is leprous, and that portrays the sin that sticks to us like sand on our bodies. Deep inside, we have the Spirit, but outwardly the sin stains our flesh. The sin is superficial, and it does not touch the inward man. The sin is like a rash on our skin, usually due to a viral infection. With our spirit, we can understand the law, and from our heart and our lungs (as they are one) we can speak the words of the Spirit or the Words of God. That part of our body cannot be stained by sin. The law is good, and even if we try our best, we cannot support them. Inwardly, we can meet the terms of the law and believe in them, but our limbs are too feeble to do them. Miriam, the leprous woman, vividly portrays our despair. The leprous woman is examined by the priest, but unknown to him she has a son. Both Zorah and Eshtaol are leprous and inflicted with death, but she will procure the son or the 1,100 pieces of silver. She is bound to die, but she will cause the new life to flourish. If any today are leprous, it is not life-threatening, but the horror is that their extremities decay and fall off. Even when we are leprous, we can believe with our heart, and with our mouth we can speak the Words of Godzirra and Eshtaol are situated on the border of Judah and Dan, and from that region they headed north to seek more land to live in. The five men travelled through Ephraim and visited the house of Micah, and there they met the Levite priest. They noticed the young Levite's priestly role, and they took him aside and asked him three questions:

Who brought you here?
What are you doing here?
And why are you here?

Clearly, his accent betrayed him, and it was evident he did not belong to Ephraim. He needed to be in his home country, Judah, but now he is worshipping God in Ephraim, and figuratively speaking, today he lives with the heathen nations. He told them about his treaty with Micah and that he was Micah's personal priest. In the previous chapter, we noticed that the Levite priest epitomises Christ, who was from Bethlehem in Judah, and he went to Ephraim. Thus, the threefold question of why he was living there is to concur that the Gospels did originate from the Jews or Judah, but it ended in Shechem or at the Samaritan woman (John 4). The Samaritan woman also enquired about the Lord, as she knew He was not from Ephraim.

The five men coming from Dan told the priest to ask God whether their journey would succeed. ‘Go in peace,’ the priest told them, ‘for the Lord will go ahead of you on your journey.’ It is wrong to outrightly judge the Levite priest, thinking he conferred with a heathen god. Actually, he did worship the true God in a rather un-Jewish manner. The Levite did adhere to the message of the Bible, but not to mainstream Christianity. The men asked him, ‘What did the Lord say?’, and not what the heathen gods said. If we merely regard the laws of Moses, we will condemn the house of gods with all its images. The five men said, if you are a so-called priest, please

tell us what Jehovah said. We need to understand what the priest told them.
He said: ‘Go in peace, for their journey has the Lord's approval.’
Our Lord often told the believers ‘Go in peace’, and we too are familiar with the ‘way’ we must follow.
So the five men headed towards the town of Laish. In Hebrew, the word Laish means a lion.
Figuratively speaking, if we do see a lion, it is Christ or Judah. When we read of the lion in the Book of Revelation (5:5–6), it is the Lamb as if it was slain. He could be either a Lamb or the Lion, as there is no real difference between the two. The Lamb that is slain is the Lion from the tribe of Judah. To keep it simple, the lion portrays the kingship and the Lamb the resurrected or the High Priest. The one is the king and the other the high priest. Similarly, in the Book of Revelation ch. 11, when we study the witnesses who will evangelise Israel, the one is the king (Moses) and the other a priest (Elijah). Dan is also a lion, and when Moses instructed the tribes of Israel, he said that Dan is a lion's cub that leaps from Bashan (a fruitful place) (Deut. 33:22). Here, Laish is the fruitful place, and its name is changed to Dan. Dan and Judah do have something in common, as Dan is the judge (Gen. 49:16), but the king is from Judah. The judge is the king, and the king is the judge! Figuratively speaking, the lion from the tribe of Dan is Christ, who is from Judah, and in this chapter His attributes are absorbed by the tribe of Dan.
The Levite priest who served God at Ephraim became a priest for Dan. He previously left Judah to go to Ephraim, and upon the advice of the five men from Dan, he left Ephraim to live at Laish. The five men from Dan did seek him, and he was taken with the 600 men from Zorah and Eshtaol. They left the leprous conditions of Israel, and from her womb a son is born. The son is the Levite priest, and he will occupy a new land. That history is very similar to the 600,000 men who left Egypt to enter the Promised Land. Levi epitomises the priestly duties of Christ; Judah the kingdom of Christ; and Ephraim the firstborn rights of the Church; jointly they are deemed as Dan or the believing remnant from the 10 tribes of Israel. We can conclude that the party is the remnant or the real reborn Israel in our dispensation. Dan went to the upper north, and in the north is the throne of God (Isa. 14:13). It is higher than the earth, and from there the Church will judge the world.
In the next chapter, we will discuss Benjamin, who is likened to Dan; Benjamin was the last son of Jacob, and he portrays the remnant in the next sixth dispensation, as they will experience the great tribulations.
The advice of the Levite to the five men was to continue going north until they reached the utter north at Laish. Prior to that chapter, someone else left Zorah and Eshtaol to hunt a lion? It was Samson, and he tore the lion apart, and upon his return he again found the lion. It is similar to the five men who later returned to Laish or the lion, and upon their return they enjoyed the fruit of the land, and they conquered the land. Upon Samson’s return to the Philistines to find the lion, he found the honey, and not the fruit of the hornet or the leprous woman. The wasp or hornet is the renowned enemy of the bee or Israel. Zorah, the land they left behind, is

known as the land of the wasp, and it also denotes the leprous condition of Israel.
Zorah portrays the unbelieving people belonging to Israel, and the honey discovered by Samson, the believing remnant. The five men found a people living carefree lives, and they were like the Sidonians. They lived carefree lives and were peaceful, so they felt safe. The people were also prosperous because their land was very fertile. They lived a great distance from Sidon, and the people from Laish had no allies close by. The lion is Christ, and we may ask which people live securely in the Lord? It is the Church, who is sheltered safely in Jesus' arms. Such a place is Laish. We may question whether the Sidonians were quiet? That is not true, but figuratively speaking they are. In Hebrew, the word Sidonians means to lie in wait or to hunt. It is like setting a trap or waiting for an opportune moment. They rested and waited for the future.
In the Old Testament, we read of Dan as he was the rider on a horse that was bitten by a snake. The horse fell backwards, and he had to wait (Gen. 49:17). ‘To wait’ is similar to the word Sidon.
Laish is inland from Sidon, and who else lived at Sidon? It was a woman who was not leprous, but she was a widow. Our Lord told Elijah to go and live in the village of Zarephath, near the city of Sidon. There was a widow, and she would feed Elijah, and she would instruct him (1 Kings 17:9–24). The woman is Israel, who is a type of the believing remnant outside Israel. To us, the village of Zarephath has no message, but it has, as it is coupled with Sidon. It is Israel, but the people living outside their usual boundaries. The people of Israel had to wait until the land bore fruit or after the 3½-year drought. Elijah was sent there, and he had to wait until it rained again.
Once our Lord spoke to Israel, saying there were many widows in Israel who needed help in Elijah's time, as hunger struck the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them. He was told to go to the widow of Zarephath, a foreigner in the land of Sidon (Luke 4:25–26). Similarly, there were many leprous people in Israel, but Elijah chose to heal a leprous man from the north or Syria. We also live far north (in heaven), and we are blessed with the blessing of the lion or the honey from the torn lion’s mouth; we are the real firstborn. In faith, we wait patiently and do not rely on any of our works—as we are told to rest!
The task of a male lion is to manage his pride, and they have a remarkable order. They slumber most of the time and depend on the female lioness to stalk their prey.
Sidon in Hebrew means to lie in wait, as a lion slowly stalking his prey. It portrays the 10 lost tribes, who are considered missing, but they do lurk around. In the near future, they will be gathered. We may argue that they are part of the Church, but who can substantiate that? The real issue today is if we are born again and not whether we are part of the 10 lost tribes. Wherever we find a lion in a coat of arms, it makes us think they are possibly related to the 10 lost tribes, as found in Western Europe and the United Kingdom. They are the lion from Judah or David, and it is Israel lying in wait in the four corners of the earth, whether it is South Africa or New Zealand.

The people at Laish enjoyed a quiet and secure life, and there were no rulers in the land that might put them to shame. They had no ties with anyone and lived far from the Sidonians. That is a perfect picture of the Church, as we are outside the camp but feast on the multiple blessings from our Lord. In all the previous dispensations, there was much talk about the rest, but it is established in our dispensation, as we are totally part of Christ. The tribe of Dan were not affiliated with the Sidonians, but figuratively speaking they did, living carelessly after the manner of the Sidonians. We are a peculiar people (1 Pet. 2:9), and we are fully dependent on Christ; the lion is Christ, and we are part of His body. Isaac also waited patiently, and in Scripture not much is said about him. He was like an old lion in wait, and if the people did bother him, he opted to move, digging new wells. When we study the Book of Genesis, we may think that Isaac was tricked by Jacob; but actually Isaac, who was blind, did bless Jacob; he was not fooled and knew the milieu. In the New Testament, it says that in faith Isaac blessed Jacob, and he kept it secret, as he knew very well whom to bless. He was the second son of Abraham, and he knew the workings of God; he realised it had to be Jacob, the second-born.

The inhabitants of Laish were killed by the 600 men from Dan, and incidentally we too can reason that we lost our lives when we accepted Christ as our Saviour. We received new life in exchange for the old. They had no ties with any other nation, and similarly we are totally dependent on Christ. Whilst we study the great riches we have in Christ, the world will suddenly go dim. In the previous dispensation of the law, Israel had both the law and the grace, but today we only have the grace. Grace was in the equation of the law, but it did not reign as it does today. Israel had to do the works of the law, but it did not secure them an eternal redemption. The five men planned a way to God, and via the five, the 600 men were greatly blessed. When the five men returned to Zorah and Eshtaol, standing figuratively at the burial site of Samson, their families asked them, “What did you find?” The men replied, “Arise, and let us go up north.” They answered, “The land is very good.” They should not hesitate to possess the land. Israel is often spurred to possess the land, as Caleb once said: “Let’s go at once to take the land,” he said. “We can certainly conquer it!” (Num. 13:30). At that moment, Caleb believed God, as with the five men who wanted to claim their promised inheritance. It was similar to the woman at the well who told the people to come with her and meet the Man who told her everything; “He is the Messiah!” So the people came streaming from the village to see Him (Jn. 4:29–30). They searched the law or the five Books of Moses, and now they found grace. It is like looking death square in the face, but they were given eternal life. We need to study the Old Testament, as beneath the surface is the apparent leprosy but deep inside is the Son who will deliver us. Who else rummages around looking for freedom? It is the often-mentioned donkey in the Bible. The donkey is mentioned more than 130 times in the Bible, known to be stubborn and difficult to train. Somehow they always seek the open countryside. It is difficult to guide a donkey, as they continually veer off to the open spaces and refuse to do anything that seems dangerous.

They can bear the weight—but prefer not to bear the burden of the “law”. If it had a choice, they would prefer the open landscape. Despite their natural instinct, they yielded to the Lord when He saddled one going towards Jerusalem. When Saul became the anointed king, he lost his donkeys. That puzzled him, and he searched for them throughout Israel and eventually Samuel had to help him. We may question if Saul was competent enough to rule a kingdom if he can’t even manage his own donkeys. A donkey with their large ears makes them good listeners. We too need to have an attentive ear (Rev. 3:22). The previous ruler of Shechem during the time of Jacob was named Hamor, the Semitic word for donkey. It used to be the territory of the donkeys. The first capital of the 10 tribes and Ephraim is Shechem and figuratively the city denotes the Church. A donkey usually refuses to be burdened by a heavy load, and similarly any true believer refuses the yoke of the law. Our Lord told His disciples to go to the village ahead of them, and once there they would find a donkey tied with a lead. They needed to untie the donkey, taking it to the Lord (Matt. 21:2). He freed Israel, and He literally sat on it. He is a Samaritan who placed the wounded on the back of his donkey and took him to the inn to be healed. He united Himself with the donkey, as together they took the wounded to the inn. It was like carrying the wounded on our Lord’s own back. It is true when it is said: “Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey” (Zech. 9:9). The importance is not the donkey the disciples freed in the village, but our Lord who in His humiliation did ride upon the donkey, freeing a whole pack of them. Our Lord came to redeem us and to set us free when we were trapped by the law. The “One” riding the donkey is the King from Shechem, the capital of the 10 lost tribes of Israel; He will reveal the truths regarding our dispensation. In the future when He does return, He will come in glory riding on a horse as in the Book of Revelation; He will be King of Israel and the complete world. The people living in the land were carefree, and that could be Israel if they trusted the Lord. He will make us lie down in green pastures and lead us beside the still waters (Ps. 23). That is promised to the Church today. Now we live in the far north or in heaven, and we are blessed with a double portion. Our inheritance is both the heaven and the earth. Our weaponry is the Levite or Christ, who journeys with us. Paul says we have the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). On their way to Laish they camped at Kirjath-Jearim in Judah. That camp was at Judah in the south, and we may question why, from all the places they chose to visit Kirjath-Jearim; they did, as it had great typological significance. Their journey took them far north, and they camped at many places. They had to capture the truths at Kirjath-Jearim. They renamed it Mahaneh-Dan, meaning “a camp of Dan”. The history of Kirjath-Jearim commenced during the time of Joshua, and it is also known by other names (Kirjath-Baal and Baalah). It is first mentioned in Joshua 9. Many commentators tend to rebuke Israel, saying they were foolish by making an alliance with the heathen nations. They were tricked and in the end the people from Kirjath-Jearim, a city belonging to the Gibeonites, who did merge with Israel. In this chapter, the Gibeonites resorted to deception to save

themselves. They were regarded as Israel's enemies, belonging to the Canaanites. God told Israel to wipe them out, but here the Gibeonites saved themselves through trickery. In the end, they belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, as Gibeon was allocated to their region. As the Canaanites convened together to ruin Israel, similarly the Gibeonites convened to merge with Israel. They shrewdly tricked Israel but in the end they were blessed. It was based on lies, but their faith was vital. They desired to live in peace amongst the Israelites, signing a treaty with Joshua. The Gibeonites sent their ambassadors to Joshua; they loaded their donkeys with old worn saddlebags, patched wineskins and their sandals and clothing were worn and tattered. The bread they had was dry and mouldy. They told Joshua and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land to ask you to make a peace treaty with us." We can think of Jacob, who also disguised himself trying to trick Isaac, resembling Esau. He looked older but in the end he was blessed. The people from Gibeon were no Israelites, and they seemed older than they looked, and their disguise worked. The Gibeonites portray the Church that is blessed with the blessings of Israel, and we too have a share in them. We as part of the Church are Abraham's seed, and co-heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:29). They made a treaty with Joshua or our Lord, and they were blessed with the blessings of Israel. They seemed older and were deemed as such. The Church is older than Israel, and we as the Church are chosen before the foundation katabole of our world (Eph. 1:4) and that is long before Adam was created, or the great flood prior to the creation of Adam. We were chosen before Israel. The Gibeonites said they were from a very distant country. They argued they were aware of Israel's victories and begged them to make a treaty with them. Joshua made a peace treaty and guaranteed their safety; he ratified this by a binding oath. Three days after making the treaty, they noticed that the people lived close to them! The majority of the Churches today are not the "unknown" Gentile nations, but rather they live close to Israel, so close, forming part of the 10 lost tribes of Israel. Israel was caught unaware and the Jews today may think the Church is their enemies, but in fact we are not, as we intermingled with them for the past 2000 years. In the Book of Ephesians, it says that we who were far away are brought near via Christ (2:11–13). Once the Israelites discovered that they were tricked, they set out to investigate, and they did reach their towns within three days. The Jews were unaware of the deception and thought they were their enemies, but it proved otherwise. Amongst their towns was Kirjath-Jearim. In the book of Joshua, it says that the town Kirjath-Jearim was given to Judah (Josh. 15:9). It has a Jewish flavour and later in the Book of Joshua it says it is situated on the borders of Benjamin (Josh. 18:14), thus it belongs to both the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It has to do with the remnant of the Jews as Benjamin is named. What else lay on the borders of Judah and Benjamin? It was the temple that is built on Mount Moriah. There is a small strip of land from Benjamin that stretches into the heart of Judah to the site of the temple. The temple bonds both Benjamin and Judah. However, the temple did belong to Judah and from amongst them, the people from Benjamin are the remnant. Kirjath-Jearim is also named in the Book of

Samuel (1 Sam. 6:21) and that is where the ark of the Lord rested. There is a long history from the time of Eli until the time when the ark went to Kirjath-Jearim. During that time, it tormented the Palestinians. When Israel entered the land of Canaan the ark first stood at Shiloh and once in the hands of the Palestinians, it plagued them. It caused a great uproar when it opposed the temple of Dagon, making it fall to the ground, and after moving it several times, they called on the people of Kirjath-Jearim to please remove the ark. So the men of Kiriath-Jearim came to get the ark of the Lord. They took it to the hillside home of Abinadab, and they ordained Eleazar, his son, to be in charge of it. The ark remained in Kiriath-Jearim for 20 years. During that time, all of Israel mourned because it seemed as though the Lord had abandoned them (1 Sam. 7:1–2). Eleazar was the ordained priest and figuratively also the son of Aaron. Being the second priest, he is an example of Christ's priesthood, and it is older than the priesthood of Aaron. The priesthood of Melchizedek precedes the priesthood of Aaron, and several times we are reminded that the resurrected Christ is part of the older priesthood of Melchizedek. The Gibeonites who portray the Church today arrived later, and they looked older, as they are part of the previous priesthood of Melchizedek. Eleazar was born after Aaron and he too epitomises the priesthood of Melchizedek. The ark stood in the place of the Gibeonites, who disguised themselves making them look older. Eliezer was also the son of Abraham as he was his servant before Ishmael was born. He said he had no children; so Eliezer his servant would be his heir (Gen. 15:3). He had the same privileged position as Isaac, and he portrays Christ. The real seed of Abraham is Christ whether he is Isaac or Eliezer; it makes no difference. Later the same Eliezer did search the country where Abraham was born, to find a suitable wife for his son Isaac. Then he is anonymous as he portrays the Spirit. He was known as the eldest servant of his house (Gen. 24:2). We all tend to agree that Abraham himself should have searched for a suitable wife for his own son Isaac, but I believe he did that, but sheltered by a different name. The first Eliezer in the Bible was a servant of Abraham, but later when he appeared he is not known by the name, as figuratively he is the Spirit; he was sent on a journey and he returned with a wife for Isaac. They are alike but named differently. He was called Eleazar but later he became anonymous, picturing the Church. When I do picture Isaac, I consider him as Aquarius, the water bearer. Now we will understand why Isaac always lived in close proximity to the water. Aquarius symbolises Isaac carrying a jug of water on his shoulders, which sustains life. He epitomises the Spirit or the Word of God. Eleazar attended to the ark at Kirjath-Jearim and figuratively it has something to do with the time of the Church, but outside the confines of Israel. Then the ark stood outside Jerusalem. The time when the ark stood at Kirjath-Jearim reveals many truths regarding the Church, but they are not on the surface. At Kirjath-Jearim the truths regarding the Church are easily traced even though they happened during the Old Testament times, and we are competent enough to appreciate them. Once the time of Kirjath-Jearim is fulfilled, the ark needed to be returned to Jerusalem, but something went wrong. They fetched the ark and put it on a new wagon. The wagon with

the new wheels is the new covenant. Despite all the careful planning David made, something did go wrong as the oxen did stumble. It is Israel bent beneath the yoke of the law. We could have predicted that. All the truths that shook King David are locked away in Kirjath-Jearim and when the time of Kirjath-Jearim is fulfilled he did send forth his Son or King David: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law” (Gal. 4:4). The ark needed to go to Jerusalem, but Judah stumbled, and now we are in the interlude in the period of the Church. That is the real break in the history and the events at Kirjath-Jearim foretold that. Israel had to be patient for another 2 years, until King David would appear a second time. The ark did stumble the first time, and it went to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The time of the ark at Obed-Edom epitomises the time of the Church. It says that Eleazar tended to the ark at Kirjath-Jearim and when the ark went to Jerusalem, there were 2 people specially assigned to attend to the ark. Eleazar had two sons namely Uzzah, who portrays the kingship and Ahio who portrays Christ’s priestly duties today. Together they are Melchizedek. Figuratively locked in the name Eleazar is both Uzzah and Ahio, as together they portray Christ’s work for us. In 2 Samuel 6 it mentions David fetching the ark, but then it was at Baale-Judah, but that is related to the name Kirjath-Jearim. At that time they called on the name of Jehovah and the ark was set upon a new wagon to be taken to Jerusalem. He lived between the cherubim.

It is also mentioned in 1 Chronicles 13:5 and then Kirjath-Jearim is named and once more the history is repeated. Kirjath-Jearim is also quoted in 2 Chronicles 1 when King Solomon did offer at Gibeon—he was the son of David and he spoke to the 12 tribes. The reason why King Solomon and the whole assembly went to the high place at Gibeon is that the ark of the Lord stood there for 20 years, and at that moment Solomon prayed for wisdom, and God gave it to him. Previously God’s tabernacle did stand there, and it belonged to Gibeon. Lastly Kirjath-Jearim is mentioned in Judges 18, and it was the resting place of the 600 men from Dan. To summarise the importance of Kirjath-Jearim and the ark is:

- For the 20 years the ark stood there.
- When David fetched the ark he felt despondent as his plans failed. Israel refused Christ, and that caused the delay.
- It stood at the house of Obed-Edom portraying the time of the Church.
- Afterwards the ark was fetched by King David and then it had a glorious entry into Jerusalem.

Figuratively speaking the Millennium will then commence. Rightly Dan could have told the people at Laish that they were the Gibeonites coming from a distant country, as they used to trick the Israelites. The Gibeonites do epitomise the Church. If later in the New Testament the Church is mentioned, it is in accord with the history of Kirjath-Jearim. Then the men went up into the hill country of Ephraim (and Samaria), and they visited the house of Micah. The five men illustrate the Church, conveying the hidden truths concerning our fifth dispensation as found in the Old Testament. It is traced in the five Books of Moses and then throughout the

Old Testament. The five men, who were familiar with the truths of our time, told their brothers, “There is a shrine here with a sacred ephod, some household idols, a carved image, and a cast idol.” It’s obvious what they had to do. The five men went over to Micah’s house, where the young Levite lived, and they greeted him kindly with the words shalom or peace. Peace is accredited to our dispensation. Christ’s rationale with us today is to create in Himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace (Eph. 2:14). When the 600 warriors from the tribe of Dan waited outside at the gate, the five spies entered the shrine and took the carved image, the sacred ephod, the household idols, and the cast idol. The five knew what was inside as they were familiar with the hidden things. They only claimed the idols as belonging to them. Figuratively that is true so they claimed the resurrected Christ, and they had a greater understanding of all the carved image and idols. After greeting the priest, they helped themselves, and the Levite priest begged for an explanation. The men said, “Keep quiet and put your hand on your mouth. Is it better to be a priest over one man or a whole tribe?” The Levite is not named, and it will be interesting to know who he is as he could easily be Eliezer or the kinsman brother of Boaz (Ruth 4:1). There are many examples of such people in Scripture as figuratively each of them epitomises Christ. Whether the Levite ruled Micah or the whole tribe of Dan or the 600 men are all similar. Symbolically the Levite is the head of the Church (Micah) or the 600 men who do portray the members of the body of Christ. They told the Levite priest to come with them, and they asked him, “Will it not be better for him to come with them and be a father and a priest to all of them? He will be a priest for the entire tribe of Dan and not only for the household of Micah.” The Church is also named as a man, and there is not much difference if the “One” is either the Church or Christ. “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called” (Eph. 4:4). “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12). Every task of our body is planned via our head or the High Priest. He gives us the bread and wine, and that is life. Similarly the Shepherd caters for all the needs of the sheep. The Levite priest agreed it is better to rule a whole tribe than only Micah. Benjamin is the remnant from Judah and Dan is the remnant from the 10 lost tribes of Israel, and what is owing to the 10 tribes is given to the 600 men who are the believing Church. The young priest was quite happy and joyously he took the sacred ephod, the household idols, and the carved image. They started on their way again, placing their children, livestock, and possessions ahead of them. That is very similar to Israel leaving Egypt, as they headed to the Promised Land, for the better. When the people from the tribe of Dan were quite a distance from Micah’s home, Micah and some of his neighbours came chasing after them. They shouted as they caught up with them. The men of Dan turned around and frankly told them, “What do you want? Why have you called that band of people to chase us?” The men were astounded by their attitude. Micah replied, “You’ve taken away all my gods and my priest, and I have nothing left!” The 600 men only said, “Watch what you say! Some of us are short-

tempered, and they might get angry and kill you and your family.” The people belonging to Micah, who was chasing the men from Dan, were like sheriffs chasing the priest. There is a detailed dispute between the people of Ephraim and Dan. Micah said they have taken my gods, and we realise that only God can make an image to satisfy His requirements. The perfect image is Christ, as He is God Himself. Micah felt despondent and said he had nothing left. He said you took my gods the ones I made! What have I got? The children of Dan said unto him, “Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and you lose your life, with the lives of thy household.” In the Hebrew language that verse mentions the soul three times, and we all know that a bitter soul is a dead soul. Bitterness is death. In our dispensation, we are told that God does not speak in our dispensation. Whatever He said is written in His Word, and nothing more needs to be added. It is complete. If God does speak to us, it is via His Word, but He will not speak aloud. That is part of His mystery as the heavens are shut. The last Words God did speak to us are the Words of Christ. “In the last days He has spoken to us in His Son” (Heb. 1:2). Frankly Micah was told to keep quiet, portraying our time of waiting. So the men of Dan went on their way, and when Micah saw that there were too many of them for him to attack, he turned around and went home. Micah hid himself as our Lord today in heaven. Then, with Micah’s idols and his priest, the men of Dan arrived at the town of Laish. They went to the “lion”, and it was slain by them. The people who lived there were peaceful and secure. They attacked and killed all the people and burned the town to the ground. The idea is that, after the resurrection of Christ, the believers will claim their hidden treasures. They grasped the truths they were taught at Kirjath-Jearim, and now they are part of the priestly order of Melchizedek. They knew about the High Priest in heaven and once they learned this, they can claim their heritage. They took Laish on the strength of the work Christ did for us. The people of Dan were well versed with the truths as found in the Old Testament, and happily they claimed what is given to them. Any believer today is en route to his promised inheritance, and he only needs to claim it. Once we accept Christ we can go to our promised inheritance, and we don’t even need to lift a finger. It is given to us, and now we are citizens of heaven or the upper north. The battle is won, and the five men from Dan were told that on a previous occasion (18:6). That is the way of the Lord, and they believed him. That is part of the new covenant and not the old. There was no one to rescue the residents of the town, for they lived a great distance from Sidon, and they had no allies close by (v. 28). They had nothing to do with Sidon and Sidon was unaware of the conflict. That happened in the valley near Beth-Rehob, and in Hebrew it is the house of the street. It is a big house or street, and it is wide, where there is enough space to move. That open place characterises the new covenant in Christ as the old is cramped. We can picture that when Samson snapped the cords that used to tie him down. Then the people of the tribe of Dan rebuilt the town and lived there. They renamed the town Dan after their ancestor, and originally it was called Laish. Now we can position Dan as part of the upper north. Two chapters later when the boundaries of Israel are mentioned it says that it

stretches from Dan (north) to Beersheba (south) (20:1). Being in the north, we need to think of Christ. As the Church, Dan has a double share, and figuratively they epitomise our blessings having territories both in the south (earth) and in the north (heaven). The place used to be called Lion (Laish), and now it is Dan or the judge. Strangely, later in that chapter, only the graven image is mentioned and not the other idols as the ephod and the teraphim. Both chapters 17 and 18 concern the Levite and early in his history, we are told he was from Bethlehem Judah, and there is a reason as typologically it is significant. Coming from Bethlehem Judah we realise that he is coupled with the house of David and also the bread (priest) as he is both king and priest. Figuratively both the tribes amalgamated into one and the Levite who lived in Ephraim bonded the tribe of Ephraim with Judah; as both of them ought to be one. The double share is to be both king and priest, and that is personified in the “Levite” and yet we are left with the question who is he? The Levite became the priest of Dan in a rather un-Jewish manner, but yet he satisfied the requirements of God. At the end of that chapter, we are told who the priest is. “And Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land” (18:30). That verse is difficult as it is a literal translation, meaning they translated every word as written in Hebrew. Therefore, it says Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Moses. We are acquainted with a different Jonathan. He was the first son of King Saul and later King David also became the son of King Saul via marriage. With the two in mind, we can ask what does the name Saul imply? Saul epitomised the old covenant, and he was head and shoulders above the others, the obvious chosen one and coming from Benjamin. He was part of the old covenant and everything as part of the old had to die, to finally pave the way for the new. Figuratively speaking Saul did, however, secure something for the “new” in Jonathan even though Jonathan did not ascend the throne. It said that Jonathan was one soul with David—meaning they are reckoned as one being one and the same. “The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam. 18:1). If David is the king, then Jonathan will be a priest. Saul pictures Israel as burdened by the law, and Jonathan should have become king, and because he was bonded with David, he did share in the privileges King David had. Figuratively speaking when David became king, Jonathan did become a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Jonathan in Hebrew means “Jehovah has given” or “a gift from Jehovah,” and what did he give us? We needed a High Priest, and that is why God gave Christ to us. He cleanses us daily and to Him is given a Name that exceeds any other name in heaven or on earth. He gave Himself willingly for us to be our head. The notion of the High Priest is flavoured in the five Books of Moses and even King Saul, who epitomised the old, secured Jonathan as his son. He communicates the new covenant. Once Jonathan died then David could become king. It is similar today as we live in the time of Jonathan or during the times of the Priest. Once the time of the Church lapses with the rapture, then the King will be manifest, and then the duties of Jonathan or the High Priestly duties of Christ will lapse, to allow His Kingdom on earth. We can argue

that Jonathan had to die for David's sake to become king. We do understand that the Book of Judges is written long before the time of Jonathan and David, but the name Jonathan needs to remind us of a priest like Eleazar. The father of the Levite priest was named Gershom, meaning a stranger or "cast out." That was a suitable name for the Levite priest and he was the firstborn of Moses (Ex. 2:22). It was a common name in Israel. The name Gershom portrays the priest that is "cast out of the community" or is set aside for a special task. That is a vivid picture of the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek as Christ is not recognised by our world today, and He is without the camp (Heb. 13:13). The world regards Him as a stranger. The difficulty of the verse "And Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses" is that Manasseh is named and not Moses? There is a small variance in both the words, and the difference is the letter "nun" or n. Modern Biblical scholars and ancient Hebrew tradition identify this "Manasseh" as Moses, on account of the spelling of the two names. Modern Biblical scholars identify this "Manasseh" as Moses, on account of the spelling of the two names. Moses is spelled מֹשֶׁה in Hebrew, and Manasseh is spelled מְנַשֶּׁה. The difference in the two names is a single letter nun (נַ). In the original manuscripts, this nun is suspended above the line and inserted between the mem and the shin, thus: מנשה. We cannot remove or discount the "n" as it is suspended over the name. The translators left it, and I believe it is correct. Many people think the suspended letter "n" is placed there due to Israel's idolatry and to spare the name of Moses. They thought it appropriate to replace his name with Manasseh, as Moses had no dealings with the wrong? Perhaps the scribes wanted people to overlook that Moses had a grandson who disrespected him. Was that done out of respect to Moses? I disagree. Aaron made the golden calf, and he was the brother of Moses, and why was his name not spared? The Levite priest was the grandson of Moses and now due to the suspended letter "nun," he is reckoned as part of the family of Manasseh or Joseph. Due to the suspended "n" he is linked with the firstborn rights of Joseph. The man from Levi and all the other priests should be tied with the firstborn right as he will bond us to the "One" or Christ. With the suspended letter "nun" the Lord relayed the duties of the priest to Joseph or Manasseh. He says the key is not Moses but Levi, and it's not Ephraim, but Manasseh who epitomises the firstborn right in this chapter. It is remarkable that the suspended "nun", or "N" in Manasseh, has a numerical value of 50, and it is the "5".

The "suspended nun" (or "inverted nun") refers to a rare textual feature where the letter nun (נ) appears inverted (backwards or upside-down) or, in some printed editions, suspended (raised above the line) as a marginal or interlinear marker.
This occurs in exactly two places in the Hebrew Bible:

1.Numbers 10:35–36 – Bracketing the two verses about the Ark of the Covenant setting out and returning:

- Before v. 35: ׆ (inverted nun)
- After v. 36: ׅ (another inverted nun)
- These verses are thus "bracketed" by the nuns.

2.Psalm 107:23–28 (in some traditions/manuscripts) – Similarly bracketing a section, though this is less universally attested.

Primary Textual Example: Judges 18:30The most famous and theologically significant occurrence relevant to biblical typology (especially in discussions of Judges) is in Judges 18:30:

"And the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land.")

- In the Hebrew scrolls and many printed editions, the letter nun (נ) in "Manasseh" (מְנַשֶּׁה) is suspended above the line: מְנַשֶּׁהּ֣.
- If the suspended nun is ignored/removed, the name reads Moses (מֹשֶׁה, Moshe).

Significance and Interpretations

1. Textual/Historical Purpose:

- Ancient scribes were reluctant to directly associate Moses (the great lawgiver) with the establishment of an idolatrous priesthood (Jonathan's line serving Dan's graven image).
- By inserting/suspending the nun, they altered "Moses" to "Manasseh" – distancing Moses from this shameful episode while preserving the original tradition that it was indeed his grandson.

2. Theological/Typological Meaning (as in your Ephraim-focused exposition):

- The suspended nun links the priestly line to Manasseh (and thus Joseph/Ephraim's firstborn rights) rather than directly to Moses/Aaron's Levitical line.
- This subtly shifts emphasis: The priesthood in this corrupt northern shrine is tied to Joseph/Ephraim's double portion – foreshadowing how Church-age blessings (grace, heavenly inheritance, Melchizedek priesthood) are mysteriously transferred to the "second" (new covenant believers, including Gentiles grafted in) during the time when natural Israel is "scattered" or set aside.
- The nun (numerical value 50) evokes grace (5) and jubilee/rest – themes of liberation from law/idolatry into new covenant freedom.

In short: The suspended nun is a scribal device to "soften" a difficult text while preserving tradition, but typologically, it beautifully illustrates the transfer of spiritual firstborn privileges from the old (Mosaic/Aaronic) order to the new (Joseph/Ephraim/Church) during our dispensation of grace. It underscores that

It is the interference of God or His grace (5). The thumb is our 5th fi
nger, and once we master our thumb or the letter 5 then our hand will n
ot be clumsy. It is the interference of God from outside our world of 4. T
he awareness of grace or the “5” is difficult for the world to grasp, as the w
orld is trapped within the world of “4” or the laws. The first principles
 of the world are the law or the letter “4” but grace is part of the “5.” I
n Scripture, there is another “5” that is suspended in the name, and th
at is the name Abraham. It used to be Abram before God changed his life. T
e Church became part of the “5” as it was the interference of God
’s grace in our world. There are many examples in the Bible where there is
 a suspended 5 or 50. The Masoretic Text is the authoritative Hebrew
text of the Jewish Bible, and in them we find the suspended and the invert
ed nuns. The letter “nun” is inspired by God for a reason. The “nun” denote
s our time of grace and our dispensation; it is the Perez or the break (
Gen. 38) and we are familiar with the “5.” Jonathan is the grandson of
Moses and, in the next chapter, we will be introduced to a Levite who i
s the grandson of Aaron and not Moses. The suspended “nun” relates u
s to the truths found in the Church or Manasseh. The history of the last f
ew cha

Judges 19
The Levite and his Concubine

A Synopsis
The gruesome narrative of the Levite and his concubine in Judges 19–21 is profoundly disturbing on the surface (rape, murder, dismemberment, civil war), yet beneath lies a deeply hidden, prophetic typology pointing to Christ's redemptive work, the Church age, Israel's future tribulation/restoration, and ultimate millennial unity. This isn't random chaos or mere moral decay; it's divinely structured foreshadowing, aligning with the book's Christocentric arc (law's failure → grace's triumph → kingdom fulfilment).
Surface Horror: Moral Anarchy in a Leaderless Age
The story echoes Sodom (Gen. 19): A Levite traveller (with concubine/servant/donkeys) seeks hospitality in Gibeah (Benjamin). No one offers shelter except an old Ephraimite. Wicked men demand the guest for abuse; the host offers his virgin daughter/concubine instead. The concubine is brutalized all night, dies at dawn clutching the threshold. The Levite dismembers her into 12 pieces, sending them to Israel's tribes—sparking outrage/civil war. Benjamin nearly annihilated (25,000 slain, only 600 survive), yet preserved through makeshift wives.
This depicts "everyone did what was right in own eyes" at its nadir—tribal solidarity shattered, yet God's sovereignty preserves a remnant.

The Symbolic Layers:

- Levite (from remote Ephraim, linked Bethlehem Judah) → Christ (High Priest/King, beyond Aaronic order). Seeks "unfaithful" concubine (Israel as adulterous wife, Hos. 1–3; Eze. 16).
- Concubine → Natural Israel under law—unfaithful (idolatry/worldly alliances), returns home (exile), yet pursued by grace. Abused/killed = Israel's suffering/rejection of Messiah, scattered among nations.
- Four-month absence → ~4,000 years (Adam to Christ) of estrangement; pursuit = Christ seeking lost sheep.
- Five-day delay at father's house → Church age (grace/"5")—Israel misses resurrection opportunity (Pentecost rejection), lingers in law's "refreshments" without true rest.
- Gibeah overnight (Benjamin) → Law's temporary "shelter"—dangerous/deadly (law brings death, Rom. 7:10). Old man (Jehovah/counsel) offers hospitality, yet wickedness erupts.
- Abuse/dismemberment → Israel's tribulation scattering/judgment (cut into 12 pieces = all tribes implicated/guilty in Messiah's "death").
- Civil war/remnant (600 Benjaminites) → End-times turmoil; near annihilation = Israel's refinement; 600 survivors = faithful remnant enduring to millennium (double portion preserved).
- Second Levite (Phinehas, Aaron's grandson) → Parallels first (Moses' grandson)—unifies priestly lines into eternal Melchizedek order (Christ reconciling law/grace).
- Resolution (wives for Benjamin) → Restoration—Israel reborn, united under one King/Shepherd (millennial peace).

The horror necessitates redemption: Concubine's death exposes law's inability to protect/save, forcing tribal unity/repentance—foreshadowing Israel's tribulation awakening ("What wounds...?", Zech. 13:6) and acceptance of pierced Messiah.
Why "Hidden" Yet Essential
Surface revulsion conceals glory: Law's era ends in death (concubine/old Israel), enabling new life (remnant/new Israel). Parallels Samson (death → greater victory) and Micah/Dan (grace inheritance). Book closes not in despair but hope—remnant preserved, pointing to full 12-tribe restoration under Christ.
Gruesome? Yes. Random? No. Divinely veiled gospel: Christ's pursuit of unfaithful bride, her "death" under law, dismemberment/scattering, yet resurrection-life for remnant. Profoundly Christocentric—agree completely!

Before we attempt to explain the next chapter, we need to recap the previous chapters. There is a long flow of history that commences with Samson, and it ends with the last chapter of this book. Typologically, Samson lived during the time of the law, and God working in him portrays the truths of the new covenant; the robes of the old covenant cannot tie him down. He exemplifies Christ, who was born under the law:
‘But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the

law.’ Gal. 4:4–5
That happened in the history of Samson, as his life portrays how redemption will be procured. When he died, he broke the two notorious pillars of Satan, namely those of sin and the law. The structure collapsed, and that is where his story ended. With that victory, the splendour of Satan is turned into rubble. Our dispensation follows the history of Samson, and the thread of the story is continued by Micah. In the book Judges, there is no real detectable coherence, but we do find it with Micah, the Levite priest, and the house of gods in Ephraim. The history of Micah, the Levite priest, and the closing chapters of the book—Judges 19–21—happened long before the time of Samson, but God chose to end the book with that history; they should have been written in the earlier chapters of the Book. Rightly, God chose them to be placed in the latter chapters of the book, as then it is easier to grasp its typological value. The history of the book is pooled in such a way that the events on God’s calendar will end with the Millennium. We can wrap up the final pages of the book as follows:
• Judges 13–16: The time of Samson corresponds to the time of our Lord on earth. It involves the law, but with Samson’s death, our Lord is portrayed as dying on the cross. The good news is that it ended our oppression with sin and death.
• Judges 17–18: Micah and the Levite priest denote the time of God’s grace and the Church. We are delivered from Zorah and Eshtaol, as our flesh was tainted by leprosy and sin, but now we are placed in the upper north to claim our rightful inheritance. With Dan, we share a double portion. Above all, we are called to be adopted as the sons of God. Our Lord never placed us beneath the yoke of the law, as it belonged to the past, and grace—or the ‘five’—will prevail. We never need to ask to be delivered from the law, as it is already dealt with. Today, the Church is the remnant, and figuratively speaking, they are the ten lost tribes.
• Judges 19–21: It is easy to end the picture as the following chapters absorb the time of Israel’s repentance. It involves both Judah and Benjamin, and that is after the calling of the Church, but finally all twelve tribes of Israel will be involved. In the end, Benjamin did receive their promised inheritance, as he is the remnant of the two tribes. We have two Levite priests: the first one, in Judges 17–18, epitomises the time of the Church, and he was from Bethlehem Judah and the grandson of Moses. The latter chapters (19–21) of the book denote the history of Israel, and then there was a different Levite priest, but also from Bethlehem Judah, and he was Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron (20:28). Typologically, they are the same, as they are from the same country. Together, the grandsons of Moses and Aaron epitomise the king and the priest, as they perform a mutual task. The remnant from the ten tribes of Israel is the tribe of Dan, who depicts the Church, and the remnant of Israel after the rapture is Benjamin; his history is portrayed by the 600 men who did survive the great tribulation. Some commentators prefer to skip the book of Judges altogether—meaning from chapter 17 to 21—and if someone does cast a comment, it is usually to tell us that there were two Levite priests: the one a grandson of Moses and the other a grandson of Aaron. They are not

acquainted with typology, and to them the chapters end awkwardly. They have nothing good to share.
The book of Matthew condenses the calling of both the Church and then the latter calling of Israel during the great tribulation when it says:
‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.’ Matt. 13:44–46 The treasure is the pearl in the sea, and our Lord did find us: it is the Church. He did leave His glory in heaven to purchase us from amongst the ‘sea of nations’ (Judges 17–18). The treasure that is hidden in the earth is Israel (Judges 19–21), and the Lord bought the field to secure the treasure. It is different, and yet similar. We need to be forewarned that if we disrespect the doings of Micah and the Levite priest, we will be left with nothing but the law. The words of Isaiah will ring in our ears:
‘So the word of the Lord to them will be, “Order on order, order on order, line on line, line on line, a little here, a little there—that they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive.”’ Isa. 28:13 To study the Bible heartlessly, continually discussing the ethical issues, is so offbeat. We need to free ourselves from thinking what is right and wrong—probe deeper—and then we will find a far greater treasure, whether in the sea (Church) or on land (Israel). We need to ask why it is written in the Bible:
‘For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us.’ Rom. 15:4 The setting of the last few chapters may sound horrible, and many will refuse to read it publicly. Whatever it teaches us, it will have an immense typological import. It is written to teach us the greater truths in the Bible. The chapter commences with the words ‘and it came to pass in those days’, as it must be studied in the context of the previous chapter. The previous chapter did concern the calling of the Church, and after our calling—or the rapture of the Church—Israel will be called. Now a Levite, who lived in a remote area in the hill country of Ephraim, took a woman from Bethlehem in Judah. But she was unfaithful to him. More than likely, the Levite was also from Bethlehem Judah. Our fifth dispensation is the dispensation of God’s grace and part of the ‘mystery’, and similarly the ensuing sixth dispensation will also be part of that great mystery (Eph. 1:9–10). Chapters 18 and 19 mention the time of the Church, and chapters 19 to 21 the mystery of God’s plan throughout the 40 years of the great tribulation. The woman was unfaithful to the priest, and she left the Levite and returned to her father’s house at Bethlehem Judah. The history of that adulterous woman is very similar to the history of Gomer, the wife of Hosea (Hos. 1:3). Hosea was told to go and marry a prostitute, proving that some of her children would be born to you from other men. Later, Gomer also left Hosea, and that is likened to Israel, who followed other men (Eze. 16). That illustrates the sad state of Israel living under the law, who ended their time of affluence by following other men. God did punish the Jewish nation by sending them into the Babylonian exile, as the roots of Israel—or Father Abraham—were at Ur (Babylon), and later into the

Egyptian captivity. In Judges 19, the woman of the priest returned to Bethlehem Judah, the place where she was born. Early in the history of the Church, God did judge the Jewish nation, and they returned to Egypt, the place where they developed as a nation. They sold themselves as slaves, and it was even foretold in the book of Deuteronomy (28:68). That is also true for us today, as we are made from the dust of the earth, and to dust we will return. The history of Israel is the history of the whole creation. After she had left him for four months, the Levite arose and looked for her, to speak friendly to her and to beg her to return. Our human race did plummet to a world of sin, and that is evident from the time when Adam left the Garden of Eden until the fourth dispensation, when our Lord appeared on earth. Our Lord quoted this when He talked about the four months leading to the harvest: ‘Do you not say, “There are still four months and then comes the harvest”? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!’ (John 4:35). The harvest is the resurrection, the new life, or the kingdom, and it will surface after four dispensations or 4,000 years from Adam to Christ. The Church is the first fruits of the harvest and thus the waving of the first fruits with the two loaves of bread (Lev. 23:11). The bread had yeast, as our bodies are soiled by the old man, and despite having our infirmities, we are alive, as the loaves were ‘made alive’ at Pentecost. The Levite man had to arrange a marriage, and with that marriage the new covenant would have been procured. He diligently searched for her as the ‘Son of Man’ who did come to seek and to save those who were lost (Luke 19:10). Her husband went to fetch her and to speak kindly to her heart (Str. no. 3820). And why to her heart? What has the heart to do with our speaking? With our heart, we believe the words that are spoken. It invites us to believe. It says if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe with our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved (Rom. 10:9). Deuteronomy 29 ends with the words that Israel will return as exiles to Egypt, but in the next chapter we read:

‘When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart, wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations’ (Deut. 30:1). They will memorise all the words our Lord did speak to them, and when they do take it to heart—meaning when they do believe in Him—He will bless them. Once they receive Him, He will pave the way ahead for them and return to Israel. If today anyone does believe in Christ, he will need to relinquish his Jewish faith or even Christendom, as it is known by the world. We need to approach our Lord alone ‘face to face’, as it is a personal affair. The Levite priest wanted her to return from her previous milieu. With him, he had a servant and a couple of donkeys. We may question who the servant is; personally, I believe it is mere symbolism. The servant exemplifies the resurrected Christ. When our Lord did come to earth to seek and to save Israel, He was ‘One’, and here the servant is reminiscent of the ‘One’. There are many examples of symbolism, and we may question why an angel has wings if we agree they have no wings. When an angel does appear on earth, he has no wings, and merely mentioning the wings sets him apart from all the others. The birds are regarded as heavenly or spiritual

creatures, and their wings are a means to express it. Therefore, we draw an angel with wings. Similarly, Hermes is the great messenger of the gods in Greek mythology, and he had wings on his heels. The wings on his heels are fictitious. There are multiple ancient mythological figures, and even when we study the book of Revelation, it is difficult to picture them. We need to interpret them figuratively, and then the book of Revelation will make sense. Some may scorn the old Egyptians and the Greek people for being so foolish as to accept the mythological gods, but they understood it was mere symbolism. Within the setting of this chapter, the Levite man who searched for the woman is Jehovah, and the servant who accompanied him is the younger generation or Christ—it remains symbolism. In the Bible, the servant always depicts the younger generation. As the wings are sculptured to the angel, similarly the servant is bonded with his master. She took the Levite man into her father's house, and her father was joyful. He thought the Messiah had come, and he begged him to remain in his house for three days. The three days is a new chapter in Israel's history and should not be read in the context of the four months she left the Levite priest. Typologically, the three days represent the three dispensations Israel was acquainted with God: from Adam to Noah; Noah to Abraham; Abraham until the time of the law, and it included their passage through the Red Sea. With Israel's passage through the water, they were reborn to be a new nation. That leads us to the fourth dispensation, and then Israel should have entered their promised rest and salvation, but due to their unbelief they failed. Only in the following dispensations will they be reborn. The people will be delivered once Christ is resurrected. With Israel's deliverance, there was a covenant, but it was the old covenant. Israel will be reborn once they receive the risen Christ, and they should have been redeemed by crossing the Red Sea, but they continued to live as slaves. They are bent under the curse of the law, and even today it is difficult for the people to distance themselves from the law, as to many it is imprinted into nature. On the fourth day, they got up early and prepared to leave, but the girl's father said to the Levite, 'Refresh yourself with something to eat; then you can go.' So the two of them sat down to eat and drink together. Afterwards, the girl's father begged him to stay the night. And when the man got up to go, his father-in-law persuaded him, so he stayed the night. Nothing happened that day except they enjoyed many drinks and snacks. That is the situation of the law: there was a planned deliverance, and the law mentions a promised redemption, but it never emerged. They had the means, but as a nation they were not redeemed. Individual believers did call on His name, but they were the minority. 'For if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterwards of another day' (Heb. 4:8). On the morning of the fifth day, there was a similar hold-up. Early in the morning on the day of Pentecost, Israel should have accepted the resurrected Christ, but they failed. There is another hindrance, and the girl's father said, 'Refresh yourself and wait till the afternoon!' So the two of them enjoyed a meal. We can sense something went wrong, and that reflects Israel's refusal to accept their Messiah. Our Lord did resurrect in the wake of our dispensation. The time He rose from the dead—17th Nisan

—culminates with the time when Noah landed the ark on dry earth, Abraham entered the Promised Land, and Israel went through the Red Sea. The day started wrong when they refreshed themselves and waited for the afternoon. They missed their chance of receiving new life or going to Ephraim or being the firstborn. There is no redemption. Then the man, with his concubine, got up to leave, and the girl's father begged them to stay the night. He told them early tomorrow they could go on their way home. The man wanted to leave, unlike the woman. However, on the evening of the fifth day they left. The complete fifth day (2,000 years), Israel had the chance to be delivered, but they refused. They waited until it became dark. The Levite and the concubine left and went towards Jebus or Jerusalem. Jerusalem was called Jebus before David conquered the city. When they were close to Jebus, the day was almost gone, but the Levite refused to stop at that city of the Jebusites, refusing to spend the night at a foreign city, as the people were not Israelites. Today is a comparable time, as then Jerusalem did not belong to the children of God. Today, Jerusalem is in the hands of the heathen nations. The Levite priest encouraged them to continue travelling until they reached Gibeah. Gibeah was part of Benjamin's territory, and in Hebrew the word Gibeah means a hill or a small incline—a hill we can easily cycle over, but not a mountain. Saul came from Gibeah, and it was part of Benjamin, in comparison to David, who came from Bethlehem Judah. Saul is Israel living under the umbrella of the old covenant, and that explains why Gibeah is a small hill and difficult to spot. The small hill at Gilead can be compared with Kirjath Jearim, as both capture the promises of the new covenant, which is locked in the old covenant. There is a gradient or a promise, but not great. Paul said that if the old covenant, which caused condemnation, was so glorious, how much more glorious is the new covenant, which makes us right with God! (2 Cor. 3:9). It is like comparing Gibeah (old covenant) to Mount Everest (new covenant). They wanted to spend the night in Gibeah or Ramah. Ramah is a town in Benjamin and on the border of Ephraim. It is also translated as a hill, and if Ramah is spelled backwards, it is Marah, meaning bitterness and death. Later in this chapter, we will deal with Ramah, and then it is called Rimmon. They are basically the same, as both are on a high place. The hill at Ramah portrays the bitterness of the law, but at Rimmon the remnant—or Benjamin—is saved. It pictures the 'five', as Rimmon in Hebrew is a pomegranate or the fifth fruit in Deuteronomy 8. The pomegranate is a fruit having a protected shell, and inside it are multiple, purple-coloured seeds. That is reminiscent of our dispensation. Gibeah was a town in the land of Benjamin. In Hebrew, the word Benjamin means 'the son of my right hand', and he was initially called by his mother 'Ben-oni'—a son of my sorrows—while Rachel died (Gen. 35:18). Jacob called him differently, thinking he would bestow on him the firstborn rights, as he renamed him 'the son of my right hand'. That did not happen. Instead, his younger brother Joseph was blessed. Joseph was the first son from his second wife Rachel, and Benjamin was the second son of Rachel. In the end, Joseph had the firstborn rights, even though he was not the second son but from Jacob's second wife. Jacob was mistaken, as things turned out differently. Benjamin did not get the promised double

portion of Ephraim, but from Joseph he received five portions (Gen. 43:34), and as yet he is still the firstborn, as he is the last remnant of Israel. Benjamin is not the last of Israel, but he portrays the remnant who will experience the great tribulation. He is the last generation that will enter the Millennium and therefore he is cryptically called the son of my last days. Benjamin is composed of two words, namely ‘ben’, which is ‘the son’, and the word ‘Jamin’, meaning ‘my right hand’ in the leadership sense. Benjamin means the son of my right hand or the same type as Jehovah. To sit on my right hand implies to be of the same kind. Jamin also means the south. Jamin stems from the Hebrew word Yamim, and that is the plural of yom, meaning days. He is not the last, but he is the personification of the son of my last days. ‘Jamin’ ends with the letter 40, but ‘Yamim’ ends with the letter 50. The 40 testifies of the suffering world, but the 50 conveys the new covenant in Christ. After the 40 years of anguish, the world will enter the 50. It is not Jamin but Yamim, and the 50 does refer to the last days. In the name of Benjamin, we do trace the 50, which exceeds the number 40 depicting our suffering world. The 50 ends in the ‘last days’, and for that reason it is translated as ‘the son of my last days’, even though grammatically it is not sound, but cryptically it is. Benjamin is the ‘last son’ or the ‘last generation of Israel’ who, as a remnant, will survive the great tribulation. They are reminiscent of the name Ben-oni. The son is born with such ‘great pain’ that the mother died, and similarly the old Israel will die during the suffering of the great tribulation. Once the new Israel is revealed, the old Israel will die. Benjamin lived and was born in the fields of Ephrathah. He was born at the same place as our Lord, at Bethlehem, and as our Lord, he is the son who was born in pain. The remnant of Israel will adhere to all Israel in the Lord Jesus, as Benjamin, who was born in pain. Each Israelite who is grouped with him will experience great pain. The old will vanish to be replaced by the new creation in Christ. We may ask, where is the Son of my last days? Christ is on God’s right hand, and the tribe of Benjamin portrays that truth. Whatever happened to Christ will be duplicated in nature or by ourselves. If our Lord suffered on earth, the world will also suffer the same pain to procure the new. Benjamin is branded as the remnant belonging to God. The ‘One’ to endure until the end is Christ, as He is the real remnant. To have life is to be part of Him, as the world is reckoned as dead. We are reminded of a time in Moses’ history, as once he was the only one chosen to live. God said He would wipe out all Israel, and only Moses would continue. He would make him a great nation instead of them (Ex. 32:10). Moses intervened for Israel as Christ did for us, and in the end God saved the Israelites. He did that due to Moses’ appeal, and it was possible as the new Moses will be the risen Christ. Our Lord is the only truthful person, as from Him a great nation will be born. This chapter is projected on the latter reborn Israel and not per se on the Church. So the Levite and the woman went on, and the sun did set as they neared Gibeah in Benjamin. There they stopped to spend the night. Somehow they tried to shelter in the promises of the law, and when they approached the town, they entered the city square. The city square is similar to ‘Rehob’ (18:28) in the previous chapter, and for the night no one

took them into their homes. That evening, an old man from the hill country of Ephraim pitied them and provided for them. He also attended to their donkeys, and the man being old conveys the counsel of God or the Jehovah of the Old Testament. ‘For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God’ (Acts 20:27). Together, the young Levite priest and the ‘old man’ from Ephraim portray the Lord Jesus Christ as part of the old (Jehovah) and the new generation (Christ). In that town lived the children of Benjamin, and figuratively speaking, it was night, as the old creation will end and their redemption is close at hand. When he saw the old man, he told him: ‘We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim.’ That suggests that the Levite wanted to detour Gibeah or the law to head towards Ephraim, where the promises of the new covenant are cherished. Gibeah is the law, and it was not his goal to end there, but to head to the new—or Ephraim. If it were still daylight, they would have taken a roundabout route to bypass Gibeah. They never planned to be stuck at Gibeah. It is a phase in our life, and we need to stay clear of it, as it is not our real target. The old man said, ‘Peace to you’, and he took them within his house. Peace is an attribute of the new covenant. Now it happened when the Levite went into the house (law), things went awfully wrong. The question is, how will we survive the old creation, and how do we become part of the new? The Levite priest is not the only person in the Bible who went past Gibeah to go to the house of the Lord or Bethel: ‘I have been to Bethlehem in Judah, and now I am going to the house of the Lord’ (19:18). In the past, Jacob also pitched his tent in the hill country of Gilead when Laban overtook him, and then he headed towards Bethel (Gen. 31:25). The history that follows is very similar to the history of Lot. It is easy to relate to this passage once we understand the meaning of Lot, as he epitomises the law. The name Lot means to wrap things closely, as a document in an envelope. In Hebrew, the word Lot means a covering. He epitomises Israel living under the law with his face covered by a veil (Isa. 25:7). It was a disturbing history when Lot was forced to leave Sodom, and similarly the intentions of the men who walked around the house, wanting to know who his visitors were. In this history, the people of the town wanted to know the Levite priest, similar to the time of Lot when they dared to entice an angel of God; then the people were blinded by an intense light, and they could not probe the door handle. They walked aimlessly around the house (law), but they could not find it. The covering is the law, whether it is the house of Lot or the old man at Gibeah. It is a complex issue, and the people probed what was beneath the covering of the law. That is Israel living under the law: it conceals the truth of Christ, and yet it is accessible. To search for the things beneath the covering is trying to improve our inner self. The people walked aimlessly around the house, and they could not enter; and if they did find the door, they had no key. We can argue that the Pharisees got rid of the key:

‘Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering’ (Luke 11:52). They lost the key of David, and the question remains: how do I get rid of the covering? Christ will rid us of the

covering or the skull cap the Jews do wear today (1 Cor. 11). Our Lord has the key of David, and He alone can unlock the door. The men did beat the door, and they demanded entry. The house at Gibeah is the law, and the Creator or God convened the house. The law is good, but once inside we are not safe—we think we are, but we are vulnerable. Also, the Lord came under the law, and it was not safe for Him, as they crucified Him. If it was not for the sake of the Law of Moses, I am sure they would not have crucified our Lord so quickly—it was the law that prompted them. There are many questions as to why, at the time of Lot, they tried to enter the house of Lot, and why were the people refused entry? What did they seek, and why were they blinded, not finding the door? The reason is that the men wanted to find themselves! The men wanted to go inside to find the other man. When many people study the Bible or the laws of Moses, their initial reaction will be: how can I progress? They are blinded and disregard the truth, as the words of the law need to guide us to Christ and not ourselves. When we do study the Bible, we do not need to be influenced by our ‘little self’ to be lured by the question, ‘How can I improve myself?’ Rather, we need to ask, ‘What does it tell me about Christ?’ If we endeavour to develop ourselves, the law will have a devastating effect on us: it will not better us, but it will devour us from the inside. It is like the working of yeast or drinking too much water, making us oedematous and introverted. Homosexuality is to try and discover ourselves or have a relation with the same sex. The men wanted to go inside to seek the other man. It is like rejecting the woman/creator relationship and ending with a man–man or woman–woman relationship. If we do not know the Creator, we will never find God in the creation. They apply the law to themselves, and what they intend to seek they never find. That person will discover himself, but he will finish having many principles or collections of laws, trying to sort out his/her life. That is like having a relationship with ourselves. That is the reason why the door is locked; otherwise, everything will go wrong. Seeking the door will blind us, and there is no redemption for them, as they are steeped in the law; the only way out is to approach our Lord. It says we need to love our neighbour (Christ) as ourselves—or even better: we need to love our neighbour more than ourselves. If you do not love yourself, it will be difficult for the other people to accept you. We need to accept and try to live with all our ailments, or else we will miss the boat. We need to seek ourselves not as part of the old covenant or the old man, but as part of the new covenant in Christ. Trying to understand ourselves will not redeem us. We are cleansed as He endured the cross, and even more now since He lives inside of us. If we live in the shadows of the law, we will never understand God, but only ourselves—‘via the knowledge of the law is death’ (Rom. 7:5). The Levite priest is invited into the house by the old man, and it is Israel living under the law. Our Lord also came to earth, and under the law He came to redeem us, but that redemption is only accomplished in the following chapters. The wicked men pounded the door, shouting to bring out the man so they could know him personally. The old man went outside and said to them, ‘No, my friends, don’t be so vile’—meaning that is not the way to interpret the law; don’t do it!

‘Since that man is my guest, don’t do this disgraceful thing. Look, here is my virgin daughter and his concubine.’ In the Bible, the virgin woman is a woman who never had any children, and if proved otherwise, it will say she knew no man. I believe the virgin woman is the woman the Levite reclaimed from her home town. They are akin, as the Levite priest and the servant were also one. The virgin is the young woman who had no children, but she did know men. Homosexuality is us not reckoning with God, and the woman that is brought out of the house is natural Israel. She communed with the whole world. The Jews were dispersed and in the Egyptian captivity since AD 70 or the dispensation of the law. Now they are reckoned as part of the heathen nations. Sadly, it ended with the woman dying a horrible death, and worse, it depicts Judaism without Christ. The Jewish nation assimilated themselves with the world, and living amongst the heathen nations is communing with them—that is dangerous and fatal. The men did not want to listen to the old man, and they took the woman outside. We may question why the Levite priest allowed that horrible thing to happen. They took the woman outside, and the Levite priest did love her. The Levite priest did love the woman, as he fetched her, and he revenged her death afterwards. The question remains: why did the priest allow her to be taken outside? The reason is the woman wanted that. That is not spelled out, but it is easy to assume. That night was a matter of life or death. In the past, we had various examples where women did sacrifice themselves to save lives. Remember, she was an idolater, and I realise there are many opinions regarding the backdrop of that history. Why is Israel dispersed amongst all the heathen people? The reason is that Israel chose that, and even when our Lord came to redeem Israel, they refused Him but chose to seek other men. In the days leading to this dispute, we are well aware that the woman was not very keen to return ‘home’ with the Levite priest, and even her father was reluctant to let her go. The Levite priest was spared a certain death. Israel wanted to be scattered amongst the other countries of the world, and it is their doing. Natural Israel did die, and because the woman died, God’s redemption spilled over to the heathen nations. Now Christ (the Levite priest) is alive, and the woman is scattered amongst the other countries. The Lord Jesus will revenge the death of the woman. We need to die due to the requirements of the law, and that is the only way to receive new life. Similarly, Israel had to die, and the seed is sown, but it will germinate, and the new Israel will emerge. Having a law in our hands is not to discuss ethical issues—if that is true, we will die a certain death. The woman died, and they mutilated her, dissected her into twelve portions—each for the twelve tribes of Israel. As revenge, the complete tribe of Benjamin was nearly wiped out, besides the 600 men who were the remnant. It is the Lord that led Israel to the law, causing death, but they needed to enter that phase, as the new life will germinate from the old. The man brought her into the house, but that proved dangerous. As part of the law, they wanted to slay the man—but now the man (Christ) is alive, but the woman (Israel) is dead. The whole history hinges on the woman and the man who wanted to save her—how did the man get into this awkward situation? The man was noble, and he merely wanted to save Israel. The woman might

have reasoned, ‘Let the people rather “take me”’, as she is accustomed to it. There may have been many tears and great anguish. The men did take the woman, and they raped and abused her throughout the night. At dawn, they let her go. At daybreak, the woman went back to the house where her master was staying. She fell down at the door and lay there until daylight. When the Levite priest awoke in the morning and opened the door of the house, he noticed the woman who had died at the steps of the doorway of the house, with her hands clutched to the threshold of the door. She lay there with her fingers grasping the promises she forfeited. What do we find on the sixth day? Forget about the ethical questions, as we need to consider what will happen during the sixth dispensation. During the sixth dispensation, the old Israel will succumb in the tribulation, and they will clutch to the promises made to them. They will return too late and never reach the promises that are invested at the mountains of Ephraim, as all life in Israel will vanish. At dawn on the sixth day, the woman will die, and it reflects a time in the future when Israel will be invaded by Gog and Magog. The woman died, and we can say she lived for 2,000 years and was hounded by many nations. She lay outstretched with her hand at the door, and that is true, as Israel did return, and now they are gathered in the land of Israel. At Jerusalem, there ought to be light, but it is dawn, and on the sixth day. The Church is gone with the rapture, and the Zionist state is dead, but a remnant will remain. When the Levite woke early in the morning to take her home, it portrays Christ’s return to earth. He opened the door, and she lay with her hands on the door. Our Lord has the same message for thousands of years: ‘Get up and let us go.’ But there was no answer. Each day our Lord had the same message, but there was no response, and there were always people ready to oppose Him. So many times they protested, and she could have gone with her Lord, but now it is impossible, as she is dead. She could not answer the Levite priest at the door. He took her on his donkey, and he went to Ephraim, where the firstborn is—or the Church. He dissected the woman, and he took her bones and scattered them amongst the twelve tribes of Israel. The bones were cut asunder (old Israel), but they will live again. It will be the new Israel, and that is portrayed in Ezekiel 37, in the valley of the dead bones who will live again. The woman is Israel, and that is the reason why all Israel is involved. Everyone who saw that said: ‘Such a thing has never been seen or done before, not since the day Israel left Egypt. Think about it! Consider it! Tell us what to do!’ That is how the chapter ends, reminding us to ponder the history, as it has a great typological impact.

Judges 20
The War against the Benjamites

A Levite priest sought the woman, and she is none other than Israel or physical Israel. The Today they are known as the Jews or Judah. It is not the Israel that is called from Egypt, but the Israel as the world knows her today. They are the same and yet different. It is Israel adhering to the laws of Moses. Her future is bleak, and she will certainly die. That is the short

history of Israel. It is the Jewish religious arrangement, and she may be Judah or Benjamin, but the complete Israel will die, and that is epitomised when the man took the body (dead) and dissected her into twelve body parts.

To many, that sounds repulsive, but he did it for a reason, as the twelve parts blame all Israel for her death. In the previous chapter, I tried to differentiate between the different tribes of Israel, but now all of Israel is blamed. It is Israel as we experience them today, including the unbelieving ten tribes of Israel.

Due to her idolatrous past, she died, even though the Levite man was very forgiving and he tried his best to save her. The Levite priest is saved, and he is none other than Christ, but the woman is Israel who died.

In this chapter, the man will revenge her death, and the sweet revenge will follow, but it caused the near death of Benjamin. If the woman dies, Benjamin will also die, as he is responsible. The tribe of Benjamin was answerable, and the question remains: will anything of Israel remain, and the answer is no—or does it? The obvious conclusion is that Benjamin died, but we do know that a remnant will be saved. The previous chapter 19 concluded with Israel or the woman dying. The nations of the world will be pleased when all of Israel is razed to the ground, but things will not go that way.

In the next chapter, the ‘son of my last days’ or Benjamin will be the remnant during the great tribulation, and they will enter the Millennium. Following the death of the woman or Israel, a remnant seems doubtful, as the odds are against them, but miraculously they are spared.

The Twist: From Apparent Extinction to Remnant Revelation

Judges 19–21 spirals into horror:

- Concubine (unfaithful Israel under law) abused/dismembered → Israel's "death"/scattering (tribulation foreshadow).
- Civil war: 11 tribes vow Benjamin's erasure (oath against intermarriage).
- Benjamin decimated (only 600 men survive at Rimmon rock—near annihilation).

Yet the twist reverses doom:

- Israel grieves: "Why has one tribe been cut off?" (21:3,6)—echoing lament over lost unity.
- Remnant preserved: 600 survive (typological 600 from Dan earlier = complete deliverance through grace).
- Wives provided (400 virgins from Jabesh-Gilead + 200 "seized" at Shiloh feast)—Benjamin rebuilt, inheritance secured.
- Final line: Tribes return home, rebuilt—harmony restored, not ended.

This isn't failure but exposition of remnant theology: Old Israel "dies" (law's curse, idolatry's fruit), yet God sovereignly spares/grafts a faithful core for future blessing. Echoes Ezekiel 37 (dry bones live), Romans 11 (natural branches broken, wild grafted—remnant saved by grace).
Typological Layers: Hidden Redemption Unveiled

There are many hidden truths.

- Concubine/Israel's death → Natural Israel under law—unfaithful (world alliances/idolatry), abused (tribulation), dismembered (scattered/exile). Dies clutching threshold (clinging to promises too late).
- Levite (Bethlehem Judah) → Christ—pursues/seeks unfaithful bride, grieves loss, avenges (judgment on wickedness).
- Civil war/Benjamin's near-wipeout → Tribulation fury—Israel vs. itself/world; law's "left-handed" strength (self-reliance) initially prevails, but crumbles on "third day" (resurrection motif).
- 600 survivors at Rimmon ("pomegranate"—grace/fruitfulness) → Faithful remnant endures wilderness (Petra foreshadow), protected 4 months (testing/completion) → enters inheritance.
- Wives from Shiloh/Jabesh → Restoration—virgins (pure remnant) + "seized" dancers (joyful grace) = reborn Israel married to Redeemer (millennial peace/Shiloh = Messiah's rest).
- No king, yet deliverance → Our age's echo—Christ hidden (no visible rule), but remnant secured through grace, not law.

In short, chapter 19 ended with the nations abusing the woman and the world was pleased with their doings, leading to the death of the woman. They will be joyous when the State of Israel and Jerusalem is levelled to the ground.
In chapter 20 there is revenge, and Benjamin is the first to be punished, but in chapter 21 a remnant is miraculously spared to enter the Millennium. They are not all from Benjamin, but Benjamin epitomises all the tribes who do enter the rest.

The response that followed is that all of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and from the land of Gilead, came out as one man, and they assembled before the Lord at Mizpah. In chapter 18, we discovered the new boundaries of Dan are in the upper north, and Gilead also attended, who were placed on its eastern border beyond the River Jordan. The land of Canaan extended to the other side of the River Jordan. On the other side of the River Jordan were the tribe belonging to Manasseh (Ephraim's brother), and he also had a double portion. Manasseh had two settlements, as the other was on the western border of the River Jordan. Gilead was renowned as there Laban met Jacob, and he searched for the teraphim that were missing. There a covenant was made between Jacob and Laban, and they called the place Gilead as there they heaped a pile of stones. The name Gilead is broken into ‘gil’, meaning a heap of stones, and ‘ad’, a witness.

Many places were called Mizpah, and in Hebrew it is translated as a viewpoint or as a watchtower—it is a high place, and from there we can look afar, especially glancing at the future. It has to do with forgiveness and hiding.

The leaders of all the people of the tribes of Israel took their places in the assembly of the people of God: 400,000 soldiers armed with swords. The Benjamites heard that the Israelites had gone up to Mizpah. Then the remaining eleven tribes of Israel said to the Levite priest, ‘Tell us how that awful thing happened.’ Then the Levite, the firstborn from Judah—Bethlehem, who was then considered the high priest and king, and also the husband of the murdered woman, said: ‘I and my concubine came to Gibeah in Benjamin to spend the night. During the night the men of Gibeah came after me and surrounded the house, intending to kill me. They raped my concubine, and she died.’

That is the history of our Lord as He was spared, but Israel, or the woman, died. Natural Israel is destined to die.

The Levite then told them he took his concubine and cut her into twelve pieces and sent one piece to each tribe, because they committed that lewd and disgraceful act in Israel. Now, all of you speak and give your verdict.

All the people rose as one man, saying, ‘None of us will go home. No, not one of us will return to his house. But now this is what we'll do to Gibeah: Israel will decide their fate.’

They decided to deploy a tenth from all the warriors of Israel to fight the tribe of Benjamin. They will revenge the death of the woman, and they will fight the tribe of Benjamin at Gibeah, their capital. Saul, the firstborn from Benjamin, was from Gibeah, and there he was anointed by Samuel.

At the start, the battle is aimed against their capital.

Complete Israel approached Benjamin at their capital and demanded to hand over the men that did kill the concubine. They wanted the real culprits to execute them so as to purge the evil from them.

The Benjamites refused to heed the request of their fellow Israelites. From their towns, they came together at Gibeah to fight against the Israelites. It is the tribe of Benjamin confronting all the other tribes of Israel.

There were 700 warriors from Gibeah and 26,000 from the remaining land of Benjamin. From the Bible, it is difficult to understand how they reached the number 26,000, and I agree it’s difficult to interpret correctly. I am sure we can decrease them tenfold or even more.
Among all the warriors were 700 chosen men who were left-handed, and each of them could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. The warriors from Benjamin did it with their left hand, but King David did sling it with his right hand. To use the left hand is dangerous, and for what reason is it mentioned here? We read of another man who was also left-handed, and he was a judge of Israel. It was Ehud.
We expect the children from Benjamin (son of my right hand) to be right-handed, but not here. Why were they left-handed? We have the law at Gibeah, meaning a small height; the hill leading to the town had a slight incline. We can approach the law or Gibeah either from the left or the right. In the Old Testament days, the people were talented with their left hand as they handled the law from the left. That meant the people applied the laws to themselves, and it is dangerous. It is similar to the men walking around the house of the old man demanding the Levite man; they favour the left, making the wrong choice. It is to refuse God or the Creator, and that is reflected in their lives by choosing a man–man relationship and not a man–woman relationship. To them, the law is crammed with many sets of laws.
The alternative is to be taught by the One who gave us the law—He is the Creator, and we will soon discover that the gist of the law is Christ Jesus; and we need to approach the law from the right. The people from Benjamin were left, and they had to be right-handed like David who slung the stone from the correct hand. Being right-handed, he gave the stone or the teachings of Christ the extra momentum. The people from Benjamin used the left hand, boosting their own life's abilities, but in the end it caused their death. They were supposed to be the ‘sons of the right hand’ but they ended up being the sons of left-handed people.
When we study the judge Ehud, we are amused. Ehud was a Benjamite; ‘a son of the right hand’, but he happened to be left-handed. Judg. 3:15. He delivered Israel with the left hand as his right hand was clumsy.
The men of Israel, apart from Benjamin, mustered 400,000 swordsmen, and all of them were fighting men. The Israelites went up to the house of God (not Bethel) and inquired of God and said, ‘Who of us shall go first to fight against the Benjamites?’ I am convinced they were not 400,000 men but rather 40,000 or 4,000 men.
The literal translation of ‘the house of God’ in Hebrew is Bethel. That gives me no liberty to translate it as such, as the house of God or the tabernacle was at Shiloh and not at Bethel.
Later in that chapter they again went to the house of God, and then it was at Shiloh, as the ark of the Lord stood there. v. 27.
Shiloh is also named in relation to the tribe of Dan, as Micah's who carved images were worshipped by the people from Dan as long as the Tabernacle of God remained at Shiloh. Judg. 18:31.
Since the time when Joshua entered the Promised Land, the ark did stand at Shiloh. It remained there until the ark was captured by the Philistine

people and Eli fell backwards and broke his neck. 1 Sam. 4. Afterwards, the Philistines took the ark from the battleground at Ebenezer to the city of Ashdod. That caused them great grief, making their god Dagon collapse to the ground in front of the ark of the Lord! It went from place to place, causing havoc amongst them.
When the ark of God vanished in the hands of the Philistines, the first priority of Samuel was to go to Gibeah and to anoint King Saul. 1 Sam. 9. They literally lost the Lord with their foolish deeds; they rejected the resurrected Christ and then the time of the law commenced with King Saul. That hallmarked the end of the time of the judges, or the Book of Judges.
After the ark caused great havoc amongst them, the Philistine people begged the Israelites to fetch the ark when it stood at Kirjath Jearim, and it never returned to the tabernacle. Later King David did venture to take the ark to Jerusalem, but then it was not returned to the tabernacle, but it remained in a tent at Jerusalem. Afterwards, King Solomon did build the temple at Mount Moriah.
The disgraced priest Eli allowed the ark to be taken from the tabernacle, and since then it never returned to be in the tabernacle.
During the time of the Judges, the house of God was at Shiloh and not at Bethel, and in that chapter ch. 20 Shiloh is not mentioned, but only in the following chapter. The reason remains obscure, and I do believe there is a reason, and it is part of God's mystery. The first time the name Shiloh is mentioned, it relates to the Messiah.
'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.' Gen. 49:10.
The name Shiloh is hidden in the Book of Judges as we are dealing with the time of God's mysteries.
The Lord said the chief tribe in the end time will be Judah, and he will be the first tribe to fight Benjamin. At present, they live at Jerusalem, and during the great tribulation they will bear the greatest brunt of the tribulation, even though all the tribes were involved. By and large, the real blessings of Ephraim are confined in the Church.
The next morning the Israelites got up and pitched their camps near Gibeah, the town that epitomises the old covenant. The men of Israel went out to fight the Benjamites at Gibeah, thinking the odds were on their side. On that day, the Benjamites descended from Gibeah and killed 22,000 Israelites on the battlefield. The eleven tribes had a huge advantage due to their sheer numbers, but the tribe of Benjamin triumphed in battle. The left hand of the law or Benjamin was much stronger, and the law exercised its power with the briers of thorns, making us think of the crown of thorns that were placed on our Lord's head. The small tribe of Israel had the law as part of their armour. That is the sad state of Israel today, and they enforce themselves on the other nations of the world with the whip of the law, nurturing their ideologies.
The old world will win—that is bent on itself but not for long—it is the world that demanded the man for a homosexual relationship. On the first day, the world will win.

The men of Israel were despondent, and they tried to encourage each other to again war against Benjamin. The Israelites went up to Shiloh and wept before the Lord until evening, and they inquired of the Lord an ethical question: ‘Shall we go up again to battle against the Benjamites, who are our brothers?’ The people wanted to end the war, but the Lord answered, ‘Go up against them.’ Then the Israelites drew near to Benjamin the second day.

Then the Israelites drew near to Benjamin the second day. That time, when the Benjamites came out from Gibeah to oppose them, they killed another 18,000 Israelites, all of them armed with swords. By then 40,000 men from Israel died in battle.

Then all the Israelites went again to the house of God, and there they sat weeping before the Lord. They fasted that day until the evening and presented burnt offerings to the Lord. The Israelites again inquired of the Lord, and then the ark of God was at Shiloh, and Phinehas was the high priest and the grandson of Aaron. He intervened for them when the people asked, ‘Shall we go up again to battle with Benjamin our brother, or not?’

The Lord said, ‘Go, for tomorrow I will give them into your hands.’

On the third day, Benjamin will be conquered. It will not happen on the first or the second day, for then the tribe of Benjamin will have the upper hand. On the third day, their fortunes will change, and then they will be wiped out besides the 600 men. Typologically the complete tribe was wiped out. Phinehas was the grandson of Aaron. Aaron epitomises the high priest allied with the old covenant, and his son Eleazar portrays the resurrected Christ and His priesthood towards the nation of Israel and the world. Besides Phinehas (his grandson) epitomises the high priest during our dispensation of grace. In Hebrew, the word Phinehas is translated as the mouth of the snake or the speaking snake. It is the fiery snake of the Book of Numbers 21:9 or John 3:14. The priest Phinehas relates to our dispensation.

To understand the three days is simple:

- On the first day Israel struggled, having the curse of the law placed squarely on their shoulders. They accommodated the pressure, and God also punished them when He sent them into the Assyrian or the Babylonian captivity. Despite all the persecution, they survived the conflict.
- The second day is related to the time of our dispensation. Early in our dispensation the Jews were sent into the Egyptian exile and experienced many wars, like the Second World War. Israel continued to exist and were hassled even more than on the first day. God caused that punishment as they refused Christ. Despite everything, they survived the second day. On that day Phinehas did speak to the people, Judg. 20:28, as figuratively today or in our fifth dispensation, he epitomises Christ as our High Priest.
- On the third day, after the rapture of the Church, Israel will not endure the day, and they will be punished severely. The great tribulation will follow, and on that day Israel’s existence will end.

In the previous chapter, the woman died, and in this history the tribe of Benjamin died. As one, they shared the same fate on the third day. During the great tribulation, God’s anger will erupt. What happened to Benjamin is reminiscent of the great tribulation. At that time, Israel will set an ambush around Gibeah. They went up against the Benjamites on the third day and took up positions against Gibeah as they did before. The Benjamites came out to meet them and were drawn away from the city. The trap sealed their fate. The people of Benjamin began to inflict casualties on the Israelites as before, so that about thirty men fell in the open field and on the roads—the one leading to the house of God and the other leading to Gibeah.
While the Benjamites boasted, saying, ‘We are defeating them as before,’ then the Israelites said, ‘Let’s retreat and draw them away from the city to the roads.’ They left the town to go to a great open space or Beth-rehob, as in the previous chapter 18:28. They are drawn into the space, and previously we were told that the great space epitomises the new covenant. They were drawn from the old covenant to the new covenant, and that sealed their fate. When we did accept Christ, we had to die to the principles of the old world, and similarly here too Benjamin had to die when they are confronted with the ‘open space’ of the new covenant. The warriors of Benjamin died as they were faced with the new covenant. The old covenant will end to accommodate the new.
All the men of Israel moved from their places and took up positions at Baal Tamar, and Tamar is reminiscent of the remnant. In Hebrew Tamar is a palm tree, having a crown of leaves on a long stem into the sky.

- Tamar was the princess from the house of David.
- Previously Tamar was deceived by Judah her father-in-law. She thought she would be the wife of his youngest son. She realised she would never have children, and then she tricked Judah. She had twins from him, and she named them Perez and Zerah. Gen. 38.
- Tamar was also the daughter of Absalom, the son of David. Due to her beauty she was abused, but Absalom aided her frequently.
- Three generations later there was another Tamar, and she married a king.

Baal Tamar pictures our time of grace.
When Benjamin left their city, there was an ambush ready to invade their city. Israel's finest men made a frontal attack at Gibeah, and the fighting was so heavy that the Benjamites did not grasp they were conned. The Lord defeated Benjamin before Israel, and on that day the Israelites struck down 25,100 Benjamites, all of them armed with swords. The triumph is locked in the 5, as 5 x 5 = 25, and the number of soldiers were 25,000 men; it is the completion of God’s grace. Frequently we find the number 25 in the new temple of the Millennium, and that temple vividly portrays God’s grace. Eze. 40–48.
The men who hid in the ambush made a sudden dash on Gibeah, and they put the whole city to the sword. They sent up a great cloud of smoke from the city, and when the soldiers from Benjamin saw it, they realised the time of their devastation is definite. The soldiers of Israel determined a

fixed time when they would set the city on fire. It is similar to the future destruction of Jerusalem, for God already determined a time in the future. When the Benjamites did inflict casualties on the men of Israel (about thirty), they boasted, thinking they would easily defeat them again. They trusted their skills, and that is reminiscent of the Jewish nation today. Things did change when they noticed a column of smoke, when the men of Israel turned on them.

Then they were terrified, and the only option left was to escape the fierce Israelites, heading towards the desert. They could not escape the battle, and they left everything, fleeing to the desert. That conflict needs to remind us of the great tribulation when Israel is forced to flee to a place in the desert or Petra, a specially prepared place by God for the remnant. Most of the people were trapped and could not escape, as 18,000 men died in the battle. Now most people think our Lord is long-suffering, but not here, as they will be slain when they are drawn to the ‘open space’. At the ‘open space’ they need to decide between the old and the new covenant.

As the soldiers turned, they fled towards the desert to the rock of Rimmon. We do not know where Rimmon is, and neither Gidom. In Hebrew, the word ‘rock’ is translated as Petra, and we can argue they escaped to Petra—Rimmon.

At the end of the day, 600 men escaped to the desert, to the rock of Rimmon, where they lived for four months. They are like the remnant of people from Dan, who pictures the Church of today, but in the future the remnant from all Israel is pictured by the 600 men. They do portray the Israelites who will escape the torture of the great tribulation. The main theme of the last five chapters of the Book of Judges is the remnant. Whether it is the Church, the Jews, or the Gentiles who escaped the great tribulation.

When the Apostle Paul spoke of the remnant, he had in mind the Church. We can also reflect the history of Benjamin on the Church today, and after the rapture, the truths of the Apostle Paul will be transmitted to the remnant coming from Israel. We need to search the Scriptures. Now the remnant is the Church, and Paul once said that he was proud to descend from the tribe of Benjamin. He had a reason, as the tribe does relate to the Church.

There are more similarities between the tribe of Dan and Benjamin:

From Dan, there were 600 men who were the remnant coming from the south to invade the north or Laish.

Two chapters later we again stumble on the 600 men from Benjamin, and they were trapped at Rimmon in the desert.

In practice, those who are saved are the remnant, and they are a small minority of people. The remnant from Benjamin had to flee to the great open space and then to the desert. When Dan invaded the north or Laish, they were close to the valley at Beth-rehob, also meaning a great space with freedom. It says they continued to use the idols Micah made, and the Levite was their priest whilst the house of God was in Shiloh. Judg. 18:31. Whilst the tabernacle was at Shiloh, Jonathan was the Levite priest who is the son of Gershom, the son of Moses. His family continued to be priests

for the tribe of Dan until their exile. Therefore, Shiloh is correlated to the remnant from Dan, and likewise Shiloh is also correlated to the remnant from Benjamin.
In the following chapter, we read of the women from Shiloh who danced in the vineyards, and Israel legitimised the remnant from Benjamin to seize them as wives. Judg. 21:21. In the history of Dan, the Levite was the grandson coming from Moses, and in the history of Benjamin ch. 20 the Levite was the grandson of Aaron.
It says that 600 men turned and fled towards the wilderness to the rock at Rimmon, and they remained at the rock of Rimmon for four months. Only 600 men made the journey, as the 600 will cause the unity or bond between the old covenant and the new covenant. The 6 is not always as negative as it seems; it is damaging if the wrong things are unified, as the number of the antichrist which is 666. In the Book of Judges, the number 6 conveys the good message of hope, as it will unite the old Israel under the law with the new Israel living under the umbrella of God's grace.
There are great parallels between the tribe of Dan and Benjamin, as both had a remnant that were either blessed or escaped the great tribulation. Rimmon needs to remind us of Selah, and Selah is named several times in the Book of Psalms. The many quotations beg us to review Selah or Petra in the Psalms, which is a place in the desert, as it addresses the remnant. Figuratively speaking, the rock at Rimmon is Petra, even though it may be too far away from Gibeah. I believe that during the tribulation Israel will flee to Petra, to the place in the desert, to be protected from the antichrist. That may sound outlandish, but for typological reasons the history at Rimmon has an anecdote for the future.
The word Rimmon is translated as pomegranate, and it is the fifth fruit in Deuteronomy 8:8, conveying the truths of our dispensation.
In the future, the complete remnant of Israel will be gathered at Petra. During the first 3½ years of the great tribulation they can escape to Petra, but not during the last 3½ years of the great tribulation. At the end of Daniel's 70th week, the door to Petra will be opened for them. At Petra, they will notice the wounds in His hands and His feet, and from there they will return to Jerusalem. They will follow the well-known kingly highway to invade Jerusalem. Throughout Israel's tribulation, they are urged to flee Israel, to a place in the desert. It says:
'Thus says the Lord: the people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest.' Jer. 31:2.
The 600 trapped men at Rimmon coming from Benjamin did accept the grace, and they will return to the Promised Land. That is also applicable to the Church, as we too are outside in the desert, and we are baptised into Moses in the cloud and the sea. 1 Cor. 10:2.
Three times it remarks on the rock at Rimmon, and they hid there for four months. The number 4 procures our death, and then the new life in Christ will flood us. After the four months is the gathering of the harvest or the fruits, Jhn. 4:35, and then the remnant will return to Gibeah.

Chapter 21
Israel Provides Wives for Benjamin

Israel wanted to wipe out all memory of Benjamin, promising not to give any of their daughters as wives. After the battle, the people at Shiloh cried, asking why a complete tribe of Israel is nearly wiped out. From a complete tribe only 600 men are left at Rimmon, and they killed all their children and wives.
The Israelites did swear at Mizpah, saying they would never give their daughters in marriage to any man from Benjamin. The people were at Shiloh even if that is not spelled out. They sat in the presence of God until the evening, weeping bitterly. They asked the God of Israel why He allowed everything to happen, as one of the tribes is nearly destroyed!
The persecuted tribe epitomises the Jews today. The history is very similar to the time when our Lord had His twelve apostles, but Judas got killed. He epitomises Judah, the Jews, or Judaism today.
Early the next morning the people built an altar and offered burnt and peace offerings. Then they looked for a possible solution, and they asked if any of the tribes of Israel did not attend the gathering at Mizpah.
At Mizpah the people did swear that none of those attending would give any of their daughters to a Benjamite, then obviously the tribe who did not go to Mizpah is not tied by the oath. If any tribe did not attend the assembly, their daughters may be suitable wives for the remnant coming from Benjamin. Their daughters can be given in marriage.
At that time, they also made a solemn oath vowing that anyone who refused to attend the assembly would be put to death, but their daughters would be given to the men from Benjamin.
They needed to kill the men, but their daughters were fit to marry the men from Benjamin, in order to comply with all the oaths they made.
The Israelites felt sorry for their brother Benjamin, and they found that no person from Jabesh Gilead attended the meeting.
As previously mentioned, the tabernacle was at Shiloh, and the high priest Eli went into battle with the ark, thinking it would help him. To his surprise the ark was seized by the Philistine people, and Eli and his sons got killed.
Then Samuel stepped in as high priest and promptly anointed Saul as king at Gibeah. Since Saul was anointed as king, he was not bothered with the activities of Israel, attending to his flock. That changed once he discovered that the enemy invaded Jabesh-Gilead. He rescued them to prove that he is a valiant leader and a soldier. King Saul's wife was from there.
When King Saul died, the Philistine people hung up his head in the temple of Dagon. When all the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard this, their valiant men went and seized the bodies of Saul and his sons, and they brought them to Jabesh-Gilead.
Hanging the body of Saul in the temple of Dagon is to establish the victory our Lord had over the law. Saul epitomises the old covenant, and similarly our Lord was put to shame hanging on a cross. Unbeknown to Satan, Christ disarmed the rulers and the authorities to put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him. Col. 2:15. Dagon never triumphed.
Afterwards, King David fetched the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan at Jabesh-Gilead, and he buried them in the tomb of Saul's father Kish. 2 Sam. 21:14. Kish was a wealthy man from Gibeah. 1 Sam. 9:1, 3. Jabesh-

Gilead is located east of the River Jordan, and outside the borders of Benjamin.
Jabesh-Gilead has to do with the law, and both the words Jabesh and Gibeah are very similar. In Hebrew, the word Jabesh means dry or dried up, meaning there is a drought or little water. The law has ‘little water’ and it cannot fulfil the promises God made to Israel. Gibeah is a small mount, and Jabesh-Gilead epitomises Israel living beneath the shadow of the law. It promises to take us to the greater truths, but in itself it is deficient.
Saul had possible family ties at Jabesh-Gilead, as his great-grandmother was born from one of the daughters from Jabesh-Gilead.
The assembly discovered at Shiloh the people coming from Jabesh-Gilead did not attend the meeting to decide the fate of Benjamin. So the assembly sent 12,000 of their best warriors to Jabesh-Gilead with orders to kill everyone there, including the women and children. They killed all the males and every woman who was not a virgin. Among the residents of Jabesh-Gilead they found 400 young virgins who had never slept with a man, and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh.
The Israelite assembly made a peace treaty with the 600 men from Benjamin, who were living at the rock of Rimmon in the land of Canaan. Finally, there is deliverance for Benjamin, and Israel greeted them with the words ‘shalom’ or peace. With that deliverance, Shiloh is mentioned, and we may question why here? Shiloh is the house of God, and also the mere mentioning of the land of Canaan does make us think of the Millennium and the promises God made to Israel. Shiloh epitomises both rest and the peace we have in Christ. Gen. 49:10. Then the men of Benjamin returned to their homes, and the 400 women of Jabesh-Gilead were given to them as wives.
The final resolve of the Book of Judges is that the old Israel, who are steeped in the law, will be destroyed, but it harbours the promise of a new life. During the sixth dispensation, Israel will be devastated, but from the valley of dead bones a New Jerusalem will surface.
The women from Jabesh are not like Benjamin, but they became the real Israel via the death and resurrection.
There were not enough women for all of them. The people felt sorry for Benjamin because it upsets the harmony amongst the twelve tribes of Israel. So the elders asked how they could find wives for the remaining men, since the women of the tribe of Benjamin are dead? There must be heirs for the survivors to prevent an entire tribe of Israel being wiped out. They reasoned they cannot give their own daughters to Benjamin as wives in marriage because of the oath they made. They thought they had a great answer for the 400 men who attained wives, and now they need to acquire wives for the remaining 200 men from Benjamin. They need to make a plan. They did make an oath that they would not give their daughters in marriage, but if the 200 men from Benjamin simply seize their daughters, then they will turn a blind eye to their doings.
Then they thought of the annual festival of the Lord that is held in Shiloh. Why will there be a festival at Shiloh? The reason is that figuratively the Messiah or the ‘Shiloh’ did come. The feast is the new covenant and the

marriage that will ensue. Any feast in the Bible does make us think of the inauguration of the new covenant and the marriage to follow. They told Pharaoh, ‘Let my people go that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’ Ex. 5:1. Israel left Egypt in a hurry, and the feast is the new covenant. In the New Testament, we frequently read of the feast, Matt. 22:4, and we need to be cheerful, as for us the new covenant did commence.

The people from Israel wished that the 200 men from Benjamin had wives, so they told them to go and hide themselves in the vineyards. When you see the young women of Shiloh come out for their dances, rush out from the vineyards, and each of you can seize one of them. They could take them home with them to be their wives! If their fathers and brothers do come to protest, we will tell them to be sympathetic. If the father is dead, then the brother will intervene. That is similar in the history of Tamar when Absalom pitied his daughter, and not King David. He killed one of David's sons named Amnon as he forced himself upon Tamar. 2 Sam. 13. The 200 men from Benjamin were told to steal the woman, even if it can’t be arranged with the wedding bells!

The 400 men did attain their wives from Jabesh, a twin town east of the River Jordan and Shiloh. Twin towns or sister cities are two ways to explain the supportive agreements they had amongst them. Benjamin had great dealings with them as their wives were from there. Besides them, they also had 200 wives from Shiloh that is divined by God Himself. The wives were not only from Shiloh but also from the remaining eleven tribes, but that is not spelled out.

Each of Israel’s twelve tribes are traced via a marriage to the tribe of Benjamin, and clearly the remnant does represent all the twelve tribes of Israel.

Benjamin is truly the ‘son of my last days’, and they will enter the kingdom during the sixth dispensation leading to the Millennium.

In the end, Israel was not guilty in breaking any oath since they did not give their daughters to them in marriage. The men of Benjamin did as they were told, and each man caught one of the women when they danced and carried her off to be his wife. They returned to their own land and rebuilt their towns and lived in them.

Then the people of Israel departed by tribes and families, and they returned to their own homes. We may query why that is mentioned? It is significant, as each tribe went to their destined places as they approach the dawn of the Millennium. Figuratively the reborn and new Benjamin conveys the truths regarding all the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve tribes will be gathered, and each will go to his allotted territory. At the end of the 40 years of the great tribulation, or the ‘time of Jacob’s trouble’, they will claim their promised inheritance. Then His kingdom will commence officially.

Our dispensation and the following 40 years of the great tribulation is part of God’s mysteries. Eph. 1:9, 10. Nearly 2,000 years ago Christ ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, and at the end of Daniel’s 70th week (on the day of the Lord) He will return in secret to the Mount of

Olives, to redeem Israel. At Petra the remnant of Israel will be gathered, and He will surely reveal Himself.
When we study the Gospels, Matt. 25:14–30, it says that Christ gave to His servants or Israel five, two, or one talent of money to match each person's ability. Immediately He went on a journey, and upon His return He demanded some interest on the talents He gave Israel. Some did, and the others failed.
He gave Israel the talents when He met them on the Mount of Olives or at Petra. He will leave them for 33 years to later return in His glorious apparel, defeating the armies at Armageddon. Once He settled His kingdom on earth, He will demand the talents He gave them. Many were faithful, and the others hid their talents. It does not concern our dispensation of grace but rather the time following the day of the Lord. Zec. 14:1. The Mount of Olives always portrays our Lord as the humiliated. He left the Mount before going to heaven, and He will return to Israel when they are steeped in the tribulation. He will veer them away from Jerusalem to Petra in the desert. At the end of the 33 years, He will come with great glory, and then He will not return on the outskirts of Jerusalem, but rather inside. Throughout the 33 years of the tribulation, He will make His presence felt, and He will perform many miracles at Petra, and there may even be manna from heaven, but always as part of the mystery. Upon His final return, the earth will surrender to His great splendour.
The following Book of Ruth has a very similar framework to the last few chapters of the Book of Judges. Due to a drought, Naomi and her husband experienced many hardships, and the men died in a foreign land, and she needed someone to provide for her. There were two kinsmen. The first kinsman was already tied down, but Boaz was the second kinsman who redeemed Ruth. When the two kinsmen met, it said: 'Then the (1st) kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption upon yourself, for I cannot redeem it."' Ruth 4:6.
The first kinsman had his own inheritance, as he portrays Christ as part of the Church, which is His treasured inheritance. The second kinsman is Boaz, and he portrays the Lord who will redeem Israel after the rapture of the Church. The family was about to die, and if no one redeemed Ruth, there would be no future for her. The first kinsman had an inheritance, and the other kinsman or Boaz also got one. The first kinsman is nameless or 'such a one', and in Hebrew he is 'ploni almoni'. Historically speaking, the first kinsman was older than Boaz, and he had greater authority to redeem Ruth. He was the favourite. From another perspective, it seems that the first kinsman or redeemer is Christ Himself, and since His resurrection he has hidden Himself from the world. He is the Spirit or the 'ploni almoni'. Boaz is Christ who will redeem Israel during the great tribulation, and therefore the reason why the Book of Ruth follows the Book of Judges. The Book of Ruth addresses all the complexities we found in the last chapters of the Book of Judges.